ANNALS
OF
THE BILLESDON HUNT
(Mr. FERNIE'S),
1856–1913.

by

F. PALLISER de COSTOBADIE.

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"A Leicestershire Man."

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Annals of the Billesdon Hunt.

(Mr. Fernie's)

1856—1913.

NOTABLE RUNS AND INCIDENTS OF THE CHASE, PROMINENT MEMBERS, CELEBRATED HUNTERS AND HOUNDS, AMUSING STORIES AND ANECDOTES.

COMPILED BY

F. PALLISER DE COSTOBADIE.

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LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, LIMITED.

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1914.

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PREFACE.

In undertaking to write the ANNALS OF THE BILLESDON HUNT, after an absence from the locality exceeding thirty years—during which I have enjoyed some sport in the provinces and more distant parts of the world—I am reminded [illegible] that in the interval a new generation has come h' with persons, o such an extent, olishment than I

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PREFACE.

In undertaking to write the Annals of the Billesdon Hunt, after an absence from the locality exceeding thirty years—during which I have enjoyed some sport in the provinces and more distant parts of the world—I am reminded of the fact that in the interval a new generation has come into being, and that I have 'lost touch' with persons, places and things in High Leicestershire to such an extent, as to render my task less easy of accomplishment than I had anticipated.

I am induced, therefore, to hope that the pleasure which the reader may derive from the perusal of the interesting contributions of others which enliven these pages, will incline that complacent being to regard with indulgence the deficiencies and demerits which may be found in the rest of the volume.

To the sporting Editor, upon whom the duty of reviewing the bantling may be inflicted, I would merely say that, although I have no desire to divest myself of the sole responsibility for its production, the volume should not be regarded otherwise than as an epitome of a history yet to be written, I hope without affectation, by a pen more capable of doing justice to the theme.

The non-existence of any such record must be held primarily responsible for my temerity in launching this frail bark upon the waters; it is unnecessary to emphasize that its cargo aspires neither to literary skill, still less to be regarded as an oracle in relation to the noble sport to which it is devoted. Should it serve to while away an odd half hour, possibly it may thereby justify its existence.

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writing to the text of a previously arranged syllabus; while by an endeavour to publish before Christmas, sufficient time has not been allowed for the revision of phrasing or correction of grammatical errors, which, I admit, the reader is entitled to expect, and for which I willingly shoulder all blame. In mentioning a great number of persons' names, inasmuch as I have studiously endeavoured to avoid giving the slightest cause of offence, I trust I have so far succeeded.

With reference to my notes upon 'Sporting Parsons: their Philosophy of the Chase,' I should like to add, that, since going to press, they have received striking episcopal support, inasmuch as, on the 16th of November, the Archbishop of York, when dedicating a memorial window erected by the members of the York and Ainsty Hunt, to commemorate the late Rev. Charles Slingsby, who was killed last year whilst hunting, said :—

> Some people might find it difficult to understand how there could be a close connection between hunting and the life of a Christian clergyman. He would be a bold man who would argue that hunting was so cruel that it was absolutely wrong. Many people would quite sincerely say that out of the cost of a short anxiety and strain, the fox won a protection which otherwise he would not enjoy for his own form of racy and characteristic country life.

My very sincere and grateful thanks are due, in the first place, to the three (successive) Masters: W. W. Tailby, Esq., Sir Bache Cunard, Bart., and C. W. B. Fernie, Esq., for so kindly giving me access to documents relating to the Hunt, for the historic extracts from their Hunting Journals, and for their permission to dedicate the 'Annals' to them.

I desire to express my warmest thanks to Mr. H. S. Davenport, the famous sporting correspondent, for his kindness in readily consenting to look through several of my 'proofs,' as well as for his own very interesting Reminiscences. Mr. H. Mostyn Pritchard has also a distinct

claim upon my gratitude, in good-naturedly allowing me to reproduce his original pen-and-ink sketches, as well as several graphically described runs, from his Hunting Journal.

To Sir Willoughby Maycock, for his delightful Reminiscences and the accompanying photographs, which he placed at my disposal, I am very greatly indebted ; likewise to the Rev. Cave Humfrey, for his welcome contribution respecting his uncle, the famous " Parson Dove " ; and to the Proprietors of " Baily's Magazine." My thanks are also due to Mrs. Maudslay, of Blaston Manor, for a particularly good photo, taken by herself, of ' Charles ' Isaac and Hounds. To Viscount Churchill, and to John Sladen Wing, Esq. (eldest son of the late William Wing, the well known and highly esteemed Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Cottesmore Hunt for over a quarter-of-a-century), and to all other ladies and gentlemen who have kindly favoured me with information, photographs, &c.

The courtesy of the Proprietors of the " Leicester Journal " is hereby duly acknowledged ; and any others who have done me a kindness will, I trust, consider themselves as included in this general expression of my thanks.

Lastly, my grateful thanks are as cheerfully given, as being thoroughly well deserved, to Messrs. Clarke and Satchell, for their assiduous and courteous attention to the manifold details requiring supervision in the production of the work ; to which I should like to add my testimony to the painstaking care of their foreman printer, Mr. Cape, and his staff.

F. Palliser de Costobadie.

13*th December* 1913.

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"Annals of the Billesdon Hunt."

PART I.

Biographical Sketch of

WM. WARD TAILBY, Esq., J.P., D.L.

ALTHOUGH the Tailby family are believed to have originally been settled in Lincolnshire (temp. Eliz.), the first member to locate himself in the county of Leicester was undoubtedly the owner of property situate at Slawston, as long ago as the middle of the seventeenth century, and it is from this forbear that the subject of this memoir can claim descent in direct male line. It is, however, sufficient for the present purpose merely to state that during this lengthy period Mr. Tailby's forerunners have been closely identified with the county, which, by reason of its broad pastures and other natural advantages, has for generations been pre-eminent as a centre of fox-hunting; attracting lovers of the chase, not only from all parts of the Kingdom, but also from every corner of Europe and America.

In preference to the somewhat monotonous, although orthodox, form of deducing a genealogical tree, in which, with hopeless iteration, "John the 1st" is represented as the father of "John the 2nd," and so on "ab initio ad finem" without any attempt—as a guide to posterity—to distinguish between the "man of parts," the man of action, and his more or less fossiliferous kinsman, I will confine myself to briefly stating that Mr. W. W. Tailby—the man of action,—familiary known as "little Tailby," was born on the 18th of January, 1825, he being the only son and heir of the late William Tailby, Esq., of Humberstone, co. Leicester, by his marriage with Elizbeth, only daughter of Mr. R. Stevens, of Hallaton, in the same county; that he proceeded to Oxford, where he took his degree, and having adopted the law for his profession, although he did not practice, was in due course "called to the Bar";

fortunately for fox-hunting and fox-hunters, the "call of the chase" proved more alluring, and the possibility of sitting on the "woolsack" was cheerfully abandoned for the supreme delight of sitting, and sitting tight, in the pigskin! Mr. Tailby acquired the Skeffington and Welham properties in 1860, and took up his residence at Skeffington Hall the following year, having been High Sheriff of the County in 1856. He married, 9th October 1850, Mary, daughter of Wm. Taylor Esq., of Humberstone Lodge, co. Leicester, and whilst in the very prime of life (at the age of 31), of a height and weight that would have rendered him eligible to ride in the Leger, circumstances (hereinafter related) transpired which afforded Mr. Tailby the opportunity to adopt for six months out of twelve a career for which by nature and temperament it must be admitted he was admirably adapted.

The rest of the year he devoted to the management of his estate, hospitality to his friends and neighbours, and other social obligations, including the regular performance of the duties of a County Magistrate.

Attention may appropriately here be drawn to the fact that at that period, although a manufacturing town of important proportions, Leicester had not then attained such considerable dimensions as, through the great increase of its trade and manufactures, it has since assumed; indeed, in many respects the streets more closely resembled a country market town, than the thronged highways of a great city. As the centre of a large grazing and dairy country, pastoral interests were much more "en evidence," not only upon such periodical occasions as the horse, cattle, sheep, wool and cheese fairs, which were then of considerable importance and largely attended, but each market day witnessed a large influx of the country element into the town, which moreover, was not too large to render it undesirable for hunting men, who, by reason of its greater railway facilities, could from this centre hunt with three or four packs. Hence the principal hotels, notably the "Bell" and the "Three Crowns" (the latter stood at the corner of Horse-

fair Street, now occupied by the National and Provincial Bank), were called upon to cater for many hunting guests. To the former hostelry, Thomas Egerton, Earl of Wilton, born 1799, used to come down from his seat, Heaton House, in Lancashire, and, as some indication of the growth of Leicester since the early part of last century, I may add that his Lordship frequently shot partridges in the fields, then visible from his windows at the Bell,—fields long since covered with bricks and mortar, now extending to and beyond the Great Northern Railway Station at Humberstone, a town in itself, and curiously enough partly erected, I believe, upon land which Mr. Tailby inherited from his father.

In this connection, passing mention may be made of the remarkable changes in the conditions of life, locomotion especially, which have taken place all within the one life of which I write. Born antecedent to the passing of the Reform Bill, during those troublous days of the corn riots, when, notwithstanding a military escort, the farmers' waggons, laden with corn, as they passed along the turnpike road which runs by the side of Skeffington Hall, were often attacked, and a bag of their precious contents frequently abstracted by the semi-starving inhabitants of the villages through which they passed. With the advent of steam came the gradual transition from the old stage coach to the "corridor de luxe"; the introduction of petrol brought the "horseless carriage"—the universal motor car—doing away with the old-fashioned "cob to the meet"; and greatest wonder of all, man's command of the air, "looping the loop" in the ether; giving us a new "highway" where no tracks are needed, or left behind! The submarine, torpedo and super-Dreadnought represent equivalent inventions on and under the water! And finally the discovery of radium and of the X rays presents all sorts of possibilities, whilst the telegraph, telephone, and gramophone have long claimed a great place in our every-day life. It may truly be said that at no time in the world's history has the period embraced by the *life* of *one individual* been of so epoch-

making a character—inventions, hitherto only a dream, are at last realized, bringing about vast consequences.

Be it understood that the above refers not so much to the length of years enumerated, but to the exact period covered since Mr. Tailby first saw the light, and has had the opportunity to witness and participate in the use of these marvels of civilization, which to our forefathers, if not to ourselves, would seem nothing short of miraculous.

How Mr. Tailby founded the Billesdon Hunt and proved his capacity as a M.F.H., always steadfastly adhering to the dictum that "we hunt by courtesy and not by right," I hope, with due regard to modesty, and an absence of fulsome flattery (which would only insult the intelligence of the reader), effectually to demonstrate and record in the following pages.

I cannot, however, bring this brief and imperfect sketch to a close without saying that although thirty-five years have elapsed since Mr. Tailby resigned the arduous duties of the Mastership, he has remained a very active member of the hunt and keen follower of the hounds, whose reputation he did so much to create; and until quite the last few years was always ready to give the youngsters a lead! And even now, so wonderfully hale and hearty is the veteran, that he exhibits the same keen, though necessarily passive, interest in the chase which has ever been his predominant characteristic. Most men, I think, would confess themselves in agreement with the epicurian poet, who said, "Ce monde est un banquet que je suis prête à quitter quand je serai rassasice, mais pas auparavant. La vie est un livre que je désire parcourir jusqu' à la fin, et ne fermer qu' après en avoir lu la dernière page."

That it may be long ere Mr. Tailby comes to "la dernière page," that he may be spared awhile to fight his battles over again, is, I am sure, the sincere wish of all who have ever had the privilege to know him, or experienced the unspeakable joy of riding to the sound of his horn and the cry of his hounds.

Skeffington Hall, 1790 a.d.

THE ORIGINAL QUORN COUNTRY.

THE original Quorn country (as hunted by Mr. Meynell for forty-seven years) comprised the country subsequently hunted by Mr. Coupland; Bosworth, Kirby, and Ravenstone, afterwards hunted by the Atherstone hounds; Keddlestone and Shirley, part of the Meynell country, afterwards hunted by the second Lord Waterpark; the Donington side by Lord Ferrers; and the Billesdon country, with which latter, although not exclusively, it is proposed to treat.

From an interesting old diary of the Quorndon Hunt, written long prior to the intersection of the country by the iron-road (1791-1800), kept by Thomas Jones, whipper-in to Hugo Meynell, Esq., to which all writers upon hunting in Leicestershire seem to have had recourse and to be indebted, it appears that in those far away days the Billesdon side, or that part of it which, being at a distance of from fifteen to twenty miles from the kennels might be termed the outlying country, was only partially hunted. There were considerable intervals, reynard frequently being undisturbed for weeks together, with the usual result that (like a half-shot rookery) sport in the badly hunted country varied greatly. The distance being so great, it seems to have been the usual practice for the hounds to pay occasional visits of several days' duration to the southern portion, putting up at the supplementary kennels at Little Bowden, and at any village inn where sufficient accommodation could be obtained for men, horses, and hounds, the latter being supplemented by any specimens that had been "walked" or were to be found in the immediate neighbourhood; horses also being frequently borrowed for the occasion, likewise a mount locally provided to enable the huntsman to get home!

After hunting within a radius of several miles until the

sport gave out, or the weather became inclement, huntsmen and hounds would wend their way home, sometimes not returning for ten weeks at a stretch; for instance, on the 3rd January 1792, Jones states "the hounds met at Gumley Wood, and on the 5th at Langton Hall," but not until the following March 19th, do we read of them again as far south as the Uppingham Road, which may be called the dividing line, east of Leicester, when, having met at Barkby Holt, they tried and found at Billesdon Coplow, the whole intervening period being given up to fixtures in the northern section, leaving the south quite "out in the cold." Of course occasionally hounds ran in a southerly direction, as on 30th January same year, when they "met "at Syston, found at Berry Clift, and lost him at Loseby"; again on 13th February, meeting at same place, they "found at Queniborough gorse, went away and killed at a "house near Barkby Holt; also found at Barkby Holt; "went away by Beeby and Hungarton to the Coplow, ran "into Mr. Palmer's house, and bagged him; turned him up "coming home; the hounds ran another for a while in the "Coplow and killed."

One more instance from this source of information may be cited: on November 1st, 1794, hounds met at Marston Wood, but there was no other appearance in the direction of the "line" until 20th January, 1795, when, to the credit of Jones, he had been "twice in the snow to Billesdon Coplow to disturb the foxes." But such spasmodic efforts could scarcely be regarded as a serious attempt to hunt the country. Indeed the Dalesmen amongst the precipitous snow-clad hills of the North Riding of Yorkshire, where at times it is only possible to follow on foot, managed even in those days to provide a better average of sport, and that with only a scratch pack of old and young hounds, quite a promiscuous assembly, often brought by twos and threes to the trysting place; squire, parson, farmer, and innkeeper all contributing their quota, necessarily requiring more than a crack of the whip to induce anything like order or obedience.

As nothing of any particular significance calling for special mention transpired during the next half-century, we will just glance at the position a few years prior to Mr. Tailby's advent.

In 1847, Sir Richard Sutton (in succession to Henry Greene, Esq., of Rolleston), took over the Quorn, and in 1851 the Donington side becoming vacant, Sir Richard (with the assent of all concerned) took that country also, and in 1853 handed over the Billesdon country to his son. In 1855 (November) Sir Richard Sutton died, and during the remainder of that season these countries were hunted (as a temporary arrangement) by his two sons, Mr. Richard and Captain Frank Sutton, and Mr. Clowes.

It is not, however, contended that the separation, according to fox-hunting law, between the Quorn and the Billesdon country occurred till 1856, when the Earl of Stamford and Warrington (who had taken over the Quorn), although strongly pressed to do so, distinctly refused to hunt the Billesdon side, and left that country to its own resources.

Or by way of biblical illustration it may be said that when Mr. Tailby subsequently assumed the mastership, "the rib was not *taken* from Adam's side," it had already been cheerfully surrendered.

Notwithstanding, at a later period—upon Mr. Tailby's resignation—a most unfortunate, not to say acrimonious, dispute arose as to the exact circumstances, rights and conditions existing at this period under which Mr. Tailby had consented to hunt the Billesdon side, which unhappily was carried to such lengths and occasioned such coolness as to interfere with pleasant neighbourly relations, and even to threaten the dislocation of life-long friendships. It is not, however, necessary at this juncture to dwell upon so unpleasant an episode, as the reader will find a full and impartial account of the merits of the case in Part II., dealing with the events at the period when they actually occurred.

Before proceeding further, a brief reference to Henry Greene, Esq., of Rolleston, will not be out of place, he being the only Leicestershire man to carry the horn of the Quorn, which he did from 1841–46, occupying the kennels built at Billesdon by Lord Suffield in 1838. Although not a hard rider, Mr. Greene rode with great judgment, and whilst saving his horse, always took note of the working of his hounds, thus seeing and providing plenty of sport, and that with a limited stud, for his own stable rarely exceeded half-a-dozen.

Mr. Greene, who was much liked and popular both as a M. F. H. and landlord, was descended from Squire Fortrey —(who erected the churches of Gaulby and King's Norton, the latter handsome edifice well known as a "hunting mark" prior to the steeple being knocked off by lightning, was visible for miles around),—being Lord of the Manor of Rolleston and Patron of the livings of Billesdon, Goadby, and King's Norton, which latter he presented to his great friend—the writer's father—the late Rev. Hugh Palliser de Costobadie, of whom more anon under the head of "Sporting Parsons of the Old School."

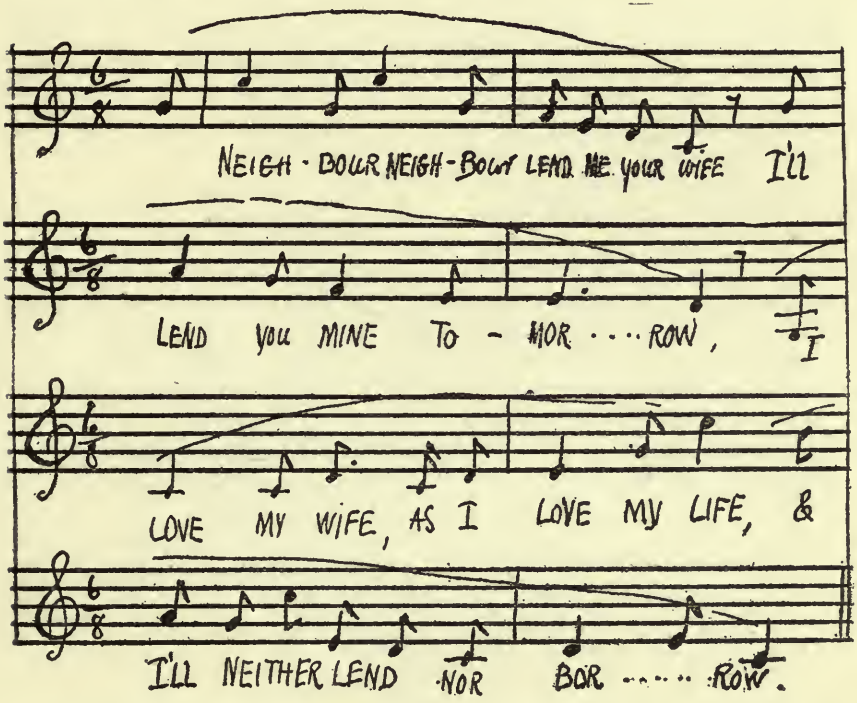
The Vicar was abroad at the time his church was so seriously damaged, but his sister, Mrs. Humfrey, of Kibworth Hall, at once raised a fund of £800, to which she largely contributed, with the object of replacing the spire; but when the architects made a further examination, they found the tower so much shaken as to render the proposal inadvisable. The subscriptions were accordingly returned, and the project had to be abandoned.

It is said that men were employed for twelve years in erecting this fabric, built of Ketton stone, at a cost of £80,000—to defray which the Squire was compelled to dispose of the Gaulby Estate,—Squire Fortrey, to whose memory there is a handsome monument at the east end of the church (which, alas! sadly needs to be restored), helped with his own hands to fashion the wrought-iron gates, and Taylor, the greatest authority on church bells, has expressed the opinion that there is more pure silver in any one of the

Church of St. John the Baptist, King's Norton, Leicestershire.

(as it appeared previous to the destruction of the steeple by lightning May 13th, 1850.)

eight bells in the tower than is allotted to a whole peal at the present day; which may account for their peculiarly sweet silvery tone. Memory recalls that upon these bells the chimes used, with other tunes, to play the following pretty air :—



And although the proposal in the opening stanza may be apt to shock the moralist, the precept of love and constancy inculcated in the reply will, I hope, banish, or at any rate counterbalance, any such impressions.

Although a covert previously existed, probably on the same site, it was Mr. Greene who, I believe, planted the fine covert known as Norton Gorse.

Mr. Greene outlived his successor, Sir Richard Sutton, passing away very suddenly from heart affection on 7th November 1861, his death being a great shock to his many

friends—and to none more than to his life-long and intimate friend the writer's father, who was out hunting with him that very morning—the hounds meeting at Rolleston, when he seemed in his usual health, but was compelled to return to the Hall, which he just managed to reach, but was soon beyond the need of temporal aid or spiritual consolation, and expired as the writer's father was assisting to remove his top-boots. The writer, although not six years old, distinctly remembers attending with his father the sale which took place at Rolleston soon after the squire's decease.

And now to "hark back"; it was not until after much hesitation that Mr. Tailby consented to become Master, and although his first meet—at Peatling—was on November 17th, 1856, it was not until the following week, on November 24th, that his first fixture was advertised, showing the difficulty under which the country laboured; Mr. Tailby not commencing regular hunting until nearly a month after the usual time, clearly indicating that he did not agree to accept the Mastership until some considerable period had elapsed after the refusal of Lord Stamford.

Mr. Tailby soon gained the support of all classes, and the sport which he provided occasioned a considerable influx of strangers into the district, who purchased, built and leased residential property, and by their liberal subscriptions and loyal assistance greatly helped in forming a most united hunt.

Fortunately Mr. Tailby took equal pains in compiling and preserving one of the most complete and beautifully kept Hunting Journals in existence, being a perfect compendium contained in five substantial MS. volumes, of every incident in connection with each successive day's hunting throughout a period of half a century, during which for twenty-two years he was at the helm. This diary is not only an exceedingly interesting chronicle of events appealing to men who remember and took part in them, but is also a valuable historical record to which future generations

Viscount Churchill. H.R.H. The Duchess of Argyll.

ROLLESTON HALL.

P. H. Adams, Photographer. *(Copyright)*

of unborn fox-hunters—we will hope—will be able to turn for information and guidance. It is, moreover, a monument to the painstaking perseverance of the author, who, however long or great the exertions of the day, never allowed the claims of nature for rest or refreshment to interfere with his self-imposed duty of recording the day's work before he himself retired for the night. Only a privileged few can, however, have the opportunity to read the original text "in extenso," and since Mr. Tailby has kindly favoured the writer by allowing him free access to the use of same, he feels he cannot exercise the privilege to greater advantage than by quoting a few extracts "verbatim et literatim," and cast off with Mr. Tailby's account of his first day as Master.

1856.

November 17th. Met at Peatling. Commenced my career as Master of Hounds to-day with a bye-day at Peatling. Servants, Tom Day, Huntsman; Boxall? 1st whip, Tomlin 2nd whip. Field small; rode "Stargazer." Found at Peatling Gorse; hounds ran well, but the fox would not break, and after rattling him about for half-an-hour they killed him at the edge of the covert. Gave the brush to Mr. Smith's wife—the owner of the covert—as being the only lady out. Trotted off to Jane Ball which we drew blank, as also John Ball, much to my chagrin—went on to Walton Holt where we found two or three foxes—got away with one, but not on very good terms, running as far as Walton Village, where we turned to the right by Knaptoft and ran up to Jane Ball, after which we could make no more out of him. Went home better satisfied with our first performance than I expected.

November 20th. Met at Saddington. Bye-day; larger field; rode Cariboo. Found our first fox at Gumley Gorse, and ran into him after running over one field: whilst eating him, another went away for Gumley Wood, but we could do no good with him, the leaves in the wood completely spoiling the scent. Drew Humphreys Gorse, where we found a cub, which went through Laughton Hills and back towards Gumley where he got to ground, and we left him. Drew the remainder of Laughton Hills blank; also Bosworth Gorse; our only

chance being Walton Holt again,—a second time this week,—we soon found; he broke at the bottom and ran quickly by Bosworth Gorse, leaving it on the left, up to Laughton Hills; the hounds worked well, but as we had been all over Laughton Hills before, the ground was foiled—we did no more good—went home, satisfied with the second day,

November 24th. Met at Holt. (*First advertised meet.)

Then comes a fine description of "A Good Day," in which the Master seems to have had it pretty well all to himself.

December 26th. Met at Keythorpe on day after Christmas Day. Very hard frost; thought there would be no hunting, but as I had come all the way from London to hunt, thought I would try. Met at 12 o'clock; found it would do; rode Chieftan. Found at Vowe's Gorse—no scent—ran slowly up to Loddington Reddish and lost him. Went to Keythorpe Wood, found a fox had gone away before we got there; ran his line slowly up to Glooston Wood, where we got on better terms with him, the scent quite changed for the better; got away quickly from the Glooston Wood, left Hallaton Wood on the left, over Hallaton Bottom as if going for Vowe's Gorse—pace very quick—he got headed in the Vale, turned back over Hallaton Bottom again across the Hallaton and Goadby Road, pointing for Hallaton, turned to the right for Vowe's Gorse, where we had the first check after twenty-five minutes' rattling pace—(alone with the hounds up to this time and very well carried)—hit the scent off on the road, across Vowe's great close, over Dexter Farm, across the Blaston Road, by Dusley's Spinney up to within a field of Holt Wood, when, as it was nearly dark, we had to stop the hounds, though they very richly deserved their fox after the best run I have seen this season of 1 hour 30 minutes. The company much pleased, though I think it was only distance that lent enchantment to their view! Roughly speaking I was never better carried, and saw the whole of it.

1857.

January 5th. Met at Norton-by-Galby. Rode Stargazer; frost

* This date assumed some importance in the controversy which ensued upon the resignation of Mr. Tailby.

and snow on the ground, did not look like hunting; went to try, found it not as bad riding as for the hounds. Drew Norton Gorse; found; went over the Norton Brook, leaving Little Stretton on the left, almost up to Hall's Spinney; bending to the right we left Houghton on the left, over the turnpike as if for Scraptoft, bending to the right we went up to Ingarsby, where we expect he got to ground, though they did not mark him. Second fox at Glenn Gorse, ran quick by Stretton Hall up to Great Stretton, up to Stoughton, and lost him at Evington, the weather not improving a bad scent; drew Knighton Spinnies blank, and came home after as good a day as we could expect in the frost and snow—15 couples of hounds.

Two months later the hounds again met at Norton-by-Gaulby, and notwithstanding that the game little Master "got an ugly fall over a style," it is described as a "very good day indeed."

March 5th. Met at Norton-by-Galby. Rode Chieftain and Coventry; drew Galby Spinnies, Norton Gorse, and Glenn Oaks blank; found at Glenn Gorse, ran over two fields and lost him; got an ugly fall over a style; no scent whatever. Found again at Shangton Holt, ran over the Stonton Brook, where he must have got into a drain, as we could make nothing more out of him. Found a third fox at Langton Caudle, which ran to ground in a drain, but we could not get him out; trotted off to Glooston Wood, found immediately; went off best pace for Keythorpe Wood, leaving it on the left and Hallaton Wood on the right; over Hallaton Bottom, leaving Vowe's Gorse on the left, by Fernfarm straight up to Alexton Wood—very fast—very good twenty-five minutes, through Alexton Wood, where we thought a fresh fox had gone away. Day cast on for Wardley Wood, whereas our fox had gone on to Stockerston and Stoke End; ran up to Stockerston, when we stopped the hounds. Very good day indeed.

Number of days hunted, 35.

Foxes killed, only 8.

Foxes run to ground—it is impossible to say how many, as several must have gone to ground we could not account for, so many drains being open.

The season has certainly been a most successful one for sport, though not in the matter of killing foxes. In this we were truly unsuccessful, but I have certainly seen more good gallops and long points this season than I ever remember; and considering the materials we had to work with, hounds and horses got together in a hurry, and no cub hunting having been done, I think we have reason to congratulate ourselves rather than otherwise on this our first season.

The quickest run we had was from Vowe's Gorse to Somerby in 44 minutes, when we lost our fox completely by the holloaing and shouting of the field getting the hounds' heads up, whilst the fox lay down, crawled back behind them and died, having been found dead by Tom Heycock the next day within two fields of where we lost him. I escaped wonderfully well, not having had more than three or four falls, and those not bad ones.

My horses all carried me well. *Cariboo* was the fastest, and I think *Chieftain* saw the most sport; *Stargazer* I like the best for a very strong country.

I hope to kill more foxes another season, after getting my new pack, bought of Colyer (Collier?), into good working condition.

List of Foxes Killed, Season 1857-58.

Cub Hunting 17.

Foxes killed - - - - - - -	29
„ run to ground - - - - - - -	28
Thoroughly accounted for during 70 days' hunting	57

Résumé of the Season.

I consider the past season on the whole a fair average season for sport, though from the absence of rain in the early part of it foxes were bad to find, being laid up generally in dry drains, the scent moreover from the extreme drought being bad. After a heavy fall of snow in the beginning of March, the foxes were more plentiful and the scent much better. Singularly enough, during two or three of the hottest weeks in March, when it was as hot as mid-summer, the scent was the best.

1858.

April 3rd. Had a very nice gallop over a grand country from Wardley Wood over Martinsthorpe Lordship, where we bolted him from under a gateway and killed him. I think, on the whole, I may say we have had rather better than an average season. The hounds have improved wonderfully; I don't think any pack can beat them for pace.

HUNTING DIARY, 1858–59.

Résumé of Cub Hunting.

Foxes have been more plentiful by half than ever I knew them, and the month of October has been a good scenting one. Our sport has been most excellent, considering the dryness of the ground. I never saw so good sport in my life as this October Cubbing; riding bad, so very hard; foxes all flyers and plenty of them. We have been out 21 days, killed 15 foxes, and run 6 to ground. Very good for High Leicestershire.

THE Run of the last Four Seasons.

1859.

January 25th. Met at Knossington. Found immediately at Ranksborough; ran for Langham, bore to the right for Ashwell, up to the railway, as if his point was Burley Wood; would not face the railway, bent to the left for Whissendine, left it on the left for Stapleford Park; turned again by the railway, crossed the Whissendine, bore to the left, and ran along the bottom to the right and got into a drain just before the hounds; had him out and ate him. Time 55 minutes—racing pace—and *the best run of the season*, or of the *last four seasons*. Went home at a quarter to one!!!! *The* run of the season. Rode Stargazer—was never better carried. Everyone said it was the best run they had seen for years.

On 1st February 1859, the Billesdon Hunt was honoured by the presence of Royalty in the person of H.R.H. The Duke of Cambridge, to whom Mr. Tailby was presented. H.R.H., as is well known, usually himself observed and expected to find in others the soldier-like quality of punc-

tuality, but upon this exceptional occasion seems to have been later than the appointed hour, as Mr. Tailby's Journal states:—

> Met at Withcote Hall, waited half-an-hour for the Duke of Cambridge, who turned up at last; was introduced to him. Found five or six foxes; good day; very satisfactory for hounds; last run 1 hour and 15 minutes; horses had enough.

Season 1858-59, Résumé (April 1st).

Number of days hunted	-	70	Do. Cub hunting	-	21
„ foxes killed	-	31	„ „	-	15
„ „ run to ground		39	„ „	-	6

Total days hunted	-	91
Foxes killed -	-	46
Foxes run to ground	-	45

1859.

November 1st. Commenced regular hunting to-day with an efficient staff, 46 couple of hounds, 16 kennel hunters and 2 hacks, all in good health with the exception of the 1st whip, who, I fear, must lay up. Tilton Wood; met here; found three foxes, the day blowing great guns, could not hear, hounds divided, and I thought we should do nothing. However, by dint of management they got settled to a fox, brushed him through Skeffington Wood, out on the Tugby side by the brook, through Tugby Wood, across the Keythorpe Road, very quick across the Turnpike, through Lord Berner's lodge gate, leaving the house on the right, through a plantation near the gardens, across for Old Keythorpe, leaving it just on the left, up the hill, through Keythorpe Wood and straight up to Glooston Wood, where the earths were open; he got to ground after a capital 45 minutes without a check; he ran up wind all the way, in the face of a most violent gale—gallant fox. Drew Loddington Reddish and found two or three foxes, but it began to pour with rain, and the day got so bad that there was no scent at all, so we went home after running them through Tugby Wood.

November 22nd. Met at Leigh Lodge. Quite a red letter day. Found at Manton Gorse, and the fox . . . ran across Martinsthorpe Park, through the spinney at the bottom of the

wall, bore to the left, over the brook, along the brook side at a good pace, up to the Preston Road, crossed it and ran to within a field of Price's Coppice, where the fox was chased by a shepherd dog and checked us for five minutes; hit him off again through Price's Coppice, ran him twice round it, and he went away like a shot out at the bottom, up to Cheselden's Coppice; here he was headed and bore to the right by a lodge in the bottom up to Braunston, leaving the village on the right —very fast. He ran across the road and up to Orton Park wood; he disdained the covert, leaving it on his left, also leaving the line of plantations on his left he crossed the Oakham and Knossington Road, and ran almost to Ranksborough, found that too hot for him, so he left the covert on his left and ran up to the Langham Road,—up to this time we had run him 1 hour 13 minutes, best pace, too good for most, very few saw it at all, and I think I may say not more than two saw the whole of it. There was a delay of a minute in the Langham Road, but they soon hit it off again, and ran up to Ashwell. Here we had a check of some ten minutes, but Goddard persevered, held them on for Burley Plantations—(everybody had gone home except residents in the neighbourhood)—hit him off in the plantations, got a holloa across the Oakham and Cottesmore Road, ran into Burley Wood, skirted the outside of it, down the avenue, through the osier bed, across the Oakham Road, when I could see the fox was beat by his going up and down two or three hedgerows; ran him on a good pace almost to Egleton, and ran into him on the railway close to the Egleton crossing and within almost a quarter-of-a-mile of Oakham Pasture, after the best day I have ever seen of 3 hours 15 minutes. He was a fine old dog fox, and I kept his brush as a memorial of so good and satisfactory a run; all the hounds up but one, and we had 6 couple of puppies out,—it was the bitch pack, and very well they did. "Stargazer" carried me most brilliantly.

November 29th. A capital day, running a nine-mile point in 55 minutes; we must have gone at least eleven.

1860.

January 10th. Eleven-and-half mile point as the crow flies in 1 hour 30 minutes. Prior's Coppice to Billesdon Coplow.

January 12th. A fourteen-mile point in 1 hour 45 minutes from the Keythorpe Plantation, through Hallaton Wood, Goadby,

Rolleston Wood, Ilston Spinney, Norton Gorse, Houghton-on-the-Hill, Thurnby, Evington to Stoughton. Rode "Ballinkeele" and "Conjura."

January 13th. Met at Norton Gorse; bye-day. Ran from Stonton Wood to Scraptoft Gorse in 50 minutes, a good nine-mile point.

January 26th and 28th. Hard frost, could not hunt.

January 31st. Met at Knossington; found at Ranksborough; crossed the Langham Road and went on for Whissendine, but the field were so wild, and over-rode the hounds to such an extent that they never got settled on to their fox, so we left him and went back to Exton Park for another. Found immediately, ran by Ladywood, leaving it on the right, bore to the left almost to Braunston, over the road and up to Brown's Coppice; here we hung a few minutes, and then went on to Price's Coppice, straight through it, and we ran with a middling scent almost to Riddlington, and thinking the fox had gone forward to Manton Gorse we trotted on to that covert, and they spoke to a fox immediately; ran quick over the brook almost up to Preston, where he beat to the right and ran up to Ayston, leaving the village on the left, through Ayston Spinney to the left, over the turnpike into Wardley Wood, once round it, and at the top by Wardley village, over the brook into Alexton, straight through it, away for Vowe's Gorse, headed, turned to the right, over the turnpike to the left, the bridge, over Loddington brook and up to Loddington village, where hounds and horses being tired we gave him up. I expect he got to ground at Loddington Hall; it was 1 hour 30 minutes from Manton Gorse, and one of the severest days for horses I ever knew, and I much regret to say poor "Gamester," that I rode, died after it from inflammation. He was a good horse, and the only one I have that never gave me a fall! He carried me so well that I shall always regret him, and mourn his loss. He died on Sunday morning, February 5th.

Very Early Litter of Cubs.

March 15th. Found a litter of six cubs in the Frisby gravel pits whilst digging for our run fox; we put them to their mother, and she carried them all away to another earth the same night.

Résumé of Season, 1859-1860.

April 7th. And thus, alas! ends the hunting season, 1859–1860, a season unprecedented almost in its amount of sport in our country, a very old sportsman having remarked to me the other day that we had not seen so good a season since 1830, when Lord Southampton hunted the Quorn country; for myself I can safely say I have never seen so good a season, the scent in the early part was almost always good in consequence of the ground being wet, our great obstacles since Christmas have been the violent wind and stormy equinoctual gales; the latter end of November and the beginning of December were our best scenting weeks; after that we had a good deal of frost. In the middle of January again we had good sport. From the 5th to the 14th of January we had three of the best runs I ever saw. The hounds and huntsmen have done their work remarkably well, and I think have given universal satisfaction. They have been out 65 days, killed 28 foxes, and run to ground 35 more. I have lost about 4 couple of hounds altogether—2½ couple were poisoned in Tilton Wood,—and I have no doubt in my own mind who the guilty party was, but I can't convince his master. The others have been ridden over and died from other causes. My three bitches from Belvoir are all turning out well, and I think my last entry generally has been very successful. Altogether I have every reason to be perfectly satisfied with the result of the season. Foxes have been more plentiful than ever; I know we have left plenty to breed from, and so good-bye to hunting diaries for another six months. It is long to look forward to!

Number of days hunted:—

Cub-hunting - -	24	89
Regular hunting -	65	
Foxes killed - - -		42
Foxes run to ground -		42

1860.

September 10th. Commenced Cub hunting to-day after a most unusually wet summer—a great deal of the harvest still out, and some hay being in the fields still. We could have begun earlier except for the corn, and it is dangerous even now, as there is a crop of wheat and oats adjoining Owston Wood where we met to-day. We start the season with 10 couple of young hounds, and 40 couple of old ones, having lost 15 couple of young ones by the distemper; luckily we are now rid of it, and the hounds both very healthy and fit to work.

Met at Owston Wood. Found two or three cubs in the big wood, the remains of part of two litters that were dug out and sent to Quenby, and which were, when strong enough, turned out at John Ball. We rattled these cubs about a good deal from one wood to the other, till the wood became quite foiled, and the scent, which was not a good one at first, quite died away, so that we had to give them up and go home pretty well tired.

We finished cub hunting November 1st, after a most successful season—far the most successful I have experienced—having killed 22 foxes and run 7 to ground. The puppies, reduced to $8\frac{1}{2}$ couples, have entered very well, and I hope will prove very useful during the ensuing season. The ground has been wetter and deeper than ever I knew it, and possibly to this is to be attributed the excellent sport. We rest till Monday the 7th, when we begin regular hunting with 46 couple of hounds, and I hope an efficient staff in every way.

And thus terminates our season 1860–61. The best I remember; last season was good, but this far surpassed it, the scent, up to the frost which came on 20th December and lasted five weeks, was wonderfully good, the ground always wet and generally so deep as to be very distressing to horses. Up to this time we had only one bad day at all. Amongst our best days the fastest was December 8th,—from Wardley Wood to Brook Mile in 30 minutes; we ran a seven-mile point. November 28th a capital 1 hour 25 minutes, from Keythorpe Wood to Galby, and back by Shangton Holt to Noseley. November 20th, from Manton Gorse through Launde Park Wood, through Owston Wood, and killed him at Stubb's Lodge after 1 hour 35 minutes. November 22nd, a good day, Lauton Hills from Wistow, 1 hour 25 minutes. November 26th, a good 30 minutes, with a kill, from Blaston earths by Hallaton

and Horninghold to Medbourne, over a very, very strong line. After this we were laid up with five-and-a-half weeks' frost, and when we started again the ground was deeper than ever, and the scent, I think, quite as good.

Our best day of the season was January 28th, when we met at Gumley, ran from the gorse by Kibworth and Carlton Clump to Glen Oaks in 1 hour 10 minutes; a second fox from Shangton Holt by Noseley to Stonton Wood, and pulled him down in 17 minutes; killed a third fox, which I believe was the Gumley fox in Stonton Wood, and found a fourth fox at Glooston Wood, which we ran up to Launde in 50 minutes: thus making out the best day's sport I ever saw. A very old sportsman who was out declared it was the best day he had seen for thirty years.

"Tragedy" got kicked one day at Lawton by Campbell of Frowlesworth, and though she recovered from the blow was good for nothing afterwards. This was almost the only serious casualty we met with. I am well satisfied with my hounds; they have done their work steadily, and our young entry have done well. "Sailor" is the admiration of all. The stable has also done pretty well. Of course we have had a good many lame ones, but only one had to be destroyed, viz., "Artillery." Altogether I congratulate myself upon having concluded a very successful season, as well in showing good runs as in killing more foxes than have been killed in the same country for many many years, if there were ever so many killed? I doubt.

The "Skittles" Riot.

The Master shows his good sense and broad mind by very gallantly refusing to countenance an unmanly and prejudiced attempt to boycot one of the fair sex—disdaining threats and intimidation. To quote his own words:—

> The great topic of dispute has been the "Skittles" riot. A certain nobleman ——, at —— Hall, taking great objection to that young lady, and wishing me to take the hounds home when she came out, and endeavouring to enforce this wish by saying that it was the general wish of the county gentlemen, and that in the event of my not taking the hounds home, I should receive a discharge from his rule [over] the other non-

rented coverts. I took my stand on the broad principles that 'the hunting field is open to all the world,' that 'I am not the censor of the morality of the hunting field,' that I have 'no right to disappoint others to gratify the prejudices of an individual,'—and that, in short, nothing should induce me to take the hounds home merely because 'Skittles' is out. I am encouraged to this the more that I never hear any complaints of her conduct in the hunting field, or that she is in any way objectionable to the ladies who come out. On this I take my stand, let the result be what it may.

As no further mention is made of this regrettable incident, we will assume that, thanks to the Master's firm attitude, the fair "Skittles" continued to participate in the sport.

I regret extremely the end of the season, but as there is a time for everything, I suppose now we ought to consult other interests than our own, but the ground now is in beautiful condition for riding; and if the lambs and farmers would let us, and there were no such things as vixens and cubs, we might hunt for another month.

Our total of sport for the season stands as follows:—

Number of days hunted—		
Cub hunting -	23	86
Regular hunting -	63	
Foxes killed—		
Cub hunting -	22	67
Regular hunting -	45	
Foxes run to ground -	-	37

1861.

September 10th. Commenced cub hunting to-day with a pack in kennel of 48½ couples of hounds, of which 13 couples are puppies; the best entry we have had. Weather very dry, ground very hard, prospect of sport consequently bad.

A Good Gallop.

October 31st. Met at Peatling, found a brace of foxes at the Gorse, and after an hour's running killed one in the ditch at the bottom of the covert. Went to Wistow, found a bob-tailed fox, ran out at the top, bore to the right for Peatling, and he got to ground in about a mile. Went to Kibworth, found in a spinney, ran very quick along the line of plantations, bore to the right by Sheepthorns, leaving it on the right, up to the Kibworth Road; up to Kibworth Spinnies again, through them and on to Carlton, by the Hall on the left, across Pateman's farm, and we ran him up to the Langton Road again, when a storm coming on we gave him up, not wanting blood and not wishing to kill so good a fox. They hunted him for 1 hour 10 minutes in the best and most perfect way I ever saw hounds work, and he took us over a very severe line. "Ploughboy" rose very much in my estimation for the way he carried me.

And this ends the cub hunting for 1861; satisfactory enough in the way of blood, but the ground has been and still is so fearfully hard that we were always laming both horses and hounds; scent in the open has generally been good, not so in covert. We have not been able to get our usual number of days in consequence ot the hard ground. Foxes very short in the woodlands, very plentiful in the small coverts.

Summary of Cub hunting.

Number of days hunted - - -	20
Foxes killed - - - -	18
Run to ground - - - -	6

November 4th. Met at the XII. Milestone, Welford Road. Commenced regular hunting to-day with a pack of hounds in good condition, and a good stud of 17 horses for the kennels.

November 7th. Met at Rolleston Hall. Found a fox immediately. We followed the hounds from the wood into the gorse, where I saw him; got 'em on to him at once, went straight through

the gorse up the hill to the left, by the spinney against Rogers', over the brook, bore to the left, across Sykes's farm up to Skeffington, across the Turnpike close to the kennels, bore to the right over Atkin's gravel pit close, straight for Skeffington and Tilton Woods, over Robin a Tiptoe, up to Launde Wood in the middle ride, leaving the lodge on the left he ran straight up to the Quaker's Lodge at Ridlington, after as fine a hunting run of 1 hour 30 minutes as I ever wish to see.

Master's comment in a footnote on the death of Henry Greene.

I was dreadfully grieved on coming home to find that poor Greene, who had entertained us at his house, had talked cheerfully with us all, and who was apparently in his usual health, had gone home after being out half-an-hour with the hounds, and died in his chair in ten minutes ; so uncertain is life ! ! !

1862.

January 2nd. Met at Ilston-on-the-Hill. Drew Burgess's Spinnies blank, found a brace of foxes at Shangton Holt, one of which they mopped, leaving nothing but his blood to tell the tale; the other went away for the Hardwick, bore to the right by Pratt's house, back to Shangton Holt, through it, over the Carlton Road, bore to the right under New Inn, across for Noseley, through Noseley Wood, over Stonton Brook up to Stonton Wood, where he was so far before us we thought it best to go and try for another, which we did at Glooston Wood and had *the run of the season*, making up, with what we had done before, *the hardest day's hunting I ever witnessed.* Found him at Glooston Wood, ran between Cranoe and Glooston on the road, by Dent's Spinney, by Stonton Wood, through Glooston Wood almost to Hallaton Wood, by Fallow Closes to Hallaton and Goadby Road, up by Vowe's towards Hallaton, up to Blaston Wood to Slawston Gorse, through it, down the hill over Medbourne Road, crossed Welham and Slawston Road almost to Welham Lodge; here the fox and hounds were in the same field; we expected to run into him every minute, but as he kept gaining, although the hounds raced at him, he must have been a fresh fox; he ran up the valley between Cranoe and Welham up to the Slawston Road, over it, up to Vowe's house, over the Hallaton Road, over the Rectory farm (here I had to help a friend with his horse, and lost a great deal of time), across the Hallaton and Norton Road, pointed for Horninghold, over the Alexton and

The Slawston Bottom.

Keythorpe Bridle-road, over the Turnpike at Hinckley Bridge, over Belton and Loddington Road, through Belton Spinnies up to Launde Park Wood, and I stopped them running a fresh fox out of Launde Park Wood down towards the Abbey at five o'clock; quite dark, every horse beat, and no one but Lord Hopetown to help me.

This was the most punishing and most severe run I ever saw. Hounds went clean away from everyone; all the horses were beat. Lord Hopetown and myself had just sufficient power left to stop the hounds. We had been running all day. I rode "Despair," and from this day changed his name to "Never Despair."

Whyte Melville Out with the Billesdon.

February 15th. Met at Slawston. Found at Slawston Thorns, ran very quickly by the church up to Fallow Closes, delayed a little, went on by Hallaton Wood to Norton Hill plantations, through Keythorpe Wood and up to Glooston Wood, where he got to ground as they were just killing him. Found again at Langton Caudle, ran by Church Langton, through Sheepthorns up to Langdon Road, over it, by Pateman's Lodge straight by Shangton Holt, where I saw the fox; ran the road on top of the covert, left Hardwick on the right, by Noseley to Goadby, down to Rolleston Brook, over it, up almost to the gorse; here we had a check; bore to the right, over the brook again to Skeffington High Fields, where we gave him up after a very good 1 hour 10 minutes.

This was a capital day; great triumph; as all the Pytchley swells were out, viz., Whyte Melville, Lords Spencer, Westmoreland, and Bateman; "cum multis aliis."

March 27th. Hounds met at Ilston-on-the-Hill. Found at Glen Gorse, and killed after a very severe 50 minutes; the hardest day of the season, ground so fearfully deep; horses all tired; several died, including Lord Spencer's; only about six got to the end. "Conjuror" carried me through both runs, the only one I had out, but he was cooked!!!

Résumé of the Season 1861-62.

All admit that we have had a wonderfully good season. Not a week has passed without one good run, and often two or three good runs a week. The ground has always been wet, and to this I suppose we must attribute in a great degree our good sport. We have not been so lucky in killing our foxes

this year as last, which I cannot but think is owing in a great measure to the huntsman's custom of going to holloa, in his anxiety to kill his fox, rather than let the hounds hunt the scent out. This, I am sure, was the cause of our not killing a fox in a good run from Launde Wood to Ashby Folville, and also in other cases. I trust, however, that my remarks to him on so objectionable a system have produced the desired result. The dogs have killed the most foxes this year, and altogether shown the most sport; last year the bitches had it. The weather has been very wet the latter part of the season. Our best run of the season was on January 2nd; our next best day was March 27th.

It is rather singular that on both these occasions we met at Ilston-on-the-Hill. Of all the coverts I think Slawston Gorse has found us the best foxes, and given us the most runs; very satisfactory to me it is. Of my horses "Despair" has done the most work and seen the best days, and next to him "Conjuror." "Kitty" and "Ballinkeele" both failed me by falling lame early in the season.

Number of days cub hunting	-	20	
„ „ regular hunting	-	70	
Days hunted	-	90	
Foxes killed cub hunting	-	18	run to ground - 6
„ „ regular hunting		29	„ „ - 38
		47	44

Had to Swim the Welland.

1862.

December 18th. Met at Stonton Wyville. Found at Langton Caudle; fox got into a rabbit hole immediately. Found another, which was headed by the people and carriages, and killed in five minutes. Went off to Stonton Wood; blank; but holloaed to a fox which got out of a hedgerow, ran up to the Caudle, where the earthstopper had got our first run-to-ground fox in his arms; he put it down; we gave him plenty of law, ran for Stonton, left the wood on the left, by Vowe's House up to Slawston Gorse, pointed for Medbourne, ran down to the Welland (into which "Conjuror" plunged and swam out safe), over it, up to within a field of Carlton Park, bore to

the left, by Drayton up to Holt Wood, where they ran into him after a very fine hunting run of more than two hours.

December 20th. Met at Leesthorpe. Found at the Punch Bowl; good day, though a very stormy and violent one. Killed fox that had four white pads—the first instance we have killed such an one; killed a second fox which had one white pad.

Accident to the Master.

1863.

January 29th. Met at Slawston. I was unable to go out myself in consequence of a bad contusion of the ribs which I got ten days ago, and had neglected. The first time I have missed for seven years!

The Duc d'Aumale present.

February 2nd. Met at Gumley; large field. Found a brace of foxes at Gumley Gorse; very good 30 minutes. Found again at John Ball; good 35 minutes.

Summary.

The result of the past season has been indifferent. Scent by no means good, weather too open, we being stopped only three days by frost the whole season, and to this want of frost to clear the atmosphere I attribute very much the want of scent. We have been obliged to be content with a gallop about once a week. We are not singular, as other countries make the same complaint. The last part of the season the ground has been so dry and hard that we were obliged to shut up on the 28th March; our hounds on that day being cut up by the hard ground and dry follows as bad as if it had been a frost. The pack, I regret to say, is at the present in a woeful state, owing to the distemper and lung disease having broken out in the kennel. We have already lost two of our best last year's entry, and five or six more must die. The puppies also just born have contracted the disease, the only two litters we have had are all dead. Our best days number 15 during the season. And thus passes away another season—hounds dilapidated, horses dilapidated, and self dilapidated; hope we may all recruit ourselves by another year. Goddard leaves on May 1st, and all the harm I wish him is that he may get a better place. I must now say farewell to the season 1862–63.

December 7th. Met at Shearsby. Found at Jane Ball; went away at the bottom of the cover along the valley. This was the hardest day I ever saw—we were running from 11-30 till 4 p.m. with the single intermission of a quarter-of-an-hour whilst we were going from Bosworth Gorse to John Ball to draw. The hounds did not get home till nine o'clock.

1864.

March 9th and 10th. Three feet of snow; could not hunt.

Number of days—

Cub hunting -	28	foxes killed -	24	to ground -	22
Rugular hunting	74	„ „ -	32	„ „ -	55
	102		56		77

Total foxes killed since 1856 - 344

Résumé of Season 1863-64.

1864. April 9th. Finished a rather indifferent season. The weather so capricious we could never depend upon it two days together, consequently the scent was not good. Ran an unusual lot of foxes to ground owing to the dryness of the drains. The hounds generally did their work well, and were very steady under the new huntsman (Frank Goodall), who seems to be much liked. I was unlucky in losing 2½ couples of brood bitches in whelp about Christmas, proving to me the undesirability of breeding in the cold weather. Horses were pretty lucky—only two killed—one staked by myself, the other ridden to death by the second whip.

We leave the country very full of foxes, as it has been all the season, as my very heavy poultry bills can testify.

Summary of Season 1864-65.

I suppose I must agree with the general opinion that this has been the worst season ever known, what with continued frost, deep snow, high winds, and hard ground we could never expect sport, though I must say that I have run half a dozen runs this season as good as any I ever saw in my life. The foxes have been particularly good and stout, making very good

"'ARD FROST, NO 'UNTING!"

points, more particularly I may specify the Follow Closes and the Wardley Wood foxes. It has been a trying season for hounds, more than for horses. I never had so few lame horses or so many lame hounds at the end of the season. We have left lots of foxes in the country, enough to have hunted another fortnight had the weather permitted us, but the temperature at the end of the season, viz., the two first weeks in April, has been something fearful, the thermometer being constantly at 65 in the shade. Hoping we may have a better season next year. I can only say good-bye to diaries and hunting particulars till next cub hunting. Two misfortunes I must not omit to mention happened to the establishment, viz., Goddard broke his collar bone (by his horse putting his foot in a rabbit hole, when I had to hunt the hounds myself), and Baily, the first whip, had a bad fall over a wire fence, which brought on concussion of the brain.

Number of days cub hunting	23	foxes killed	22
„ „ regular hunting	62	„ „	38
Number of foxes run to ground cub hunting			10
„ „ „ regular hunting			37

Season 1865-66.

1865.

From November 14th to 23rd we had the best six days in succession I ever remember.

1866.

January 1st. Met and found a fox at Gumley—thermometer 40—like spring; ground deep. Ran to Laughton, out for Bosworth, Mowsley, Saddington Reservoir to Gumley Gorse, where they killed. On to Bosworth Gorse, from whence ran a fox (or foxes), for 2 hours 35 minutes, when it got dark and we gave up.

Wonderful Day—15-Mile Point covering 20 Miles.

February 26th. Met at Saddington. Found a brace of foxes at Jane Ball: one went away for Shearsby; we followed the other to Knaptoft, pointing for Kibworth Sticks, over the earths at Kibworth Hall, and they ran into him after a very good 50 minutes. Went on to Walton Holt, told of a fox that had just gone by the covert, got on to his line, ran very slowly

over the deep ploughs, crossed the Turnpike about the XII. Milestone, ran to Bosworth Gorse, got away after ten minutes, ran over the canal and railway up to Bosworth village—ran him up the street, through some orchards, crossed the Welford Road, over the canal, left Welford on left . . crossed the canal—hounds all swam it—crossed the railway half-a-mile down into Stamford Hall Park, almost to Stamford Gorse, down to the river Avon—an ugly place, one man nearly drowned his horse; I got well over by a sort of ford, into which the next man got a ducking—passed Lilbourne station on the line by Calthorpe House, over the Rugby and Leicester Turnpike . . . up to Coton House, when I fear we changed our fox; ran through Coton Park . . . down to a brook to Cosford, and they were going up slowly for Bruntingthorpe, when as Goodall's horse was beat, and most of the others also, we thought it best to stop the hounds, after as fine a run as ever I saw of 2 hours 2 minutes. Much disappointed not to kill him, as we had run right through the Pytchley and Atherstone, and got to the borders of the North Warwickshire. We had to take a special train at Rugby for Leicester for hounds and horses, and did not get home till nine o'clock. The longest day I remember. Goodall's horse died at Rugby next day.

Résumé.

This, in contradistinction to last, has been the best season I ever hunted, the ground being as deep on the 26th March when we finished, as on the 6th November when we began. The only frost we had was from the 1st to 8th of March, so that the demand upon the horses has been very severe. I have been unlucky with my own horses, "Black Rep" and "Grey Plum" being knocked out of time before Christmas, and never came out again. Of the kennel horses "King Dan" is almost broken down and must be 'fired;' "Oakham" is dead, "Jack Shepherd" lame, and a variety of other casualties attend both stables. As to sport, we have hardly ever been out without a run; as to foxes, there have been plenty in the Monday's country—John Ball always holding two or three foxes—owing, I suppose, to its late neighbour —— being in quod!

The foxes have made good points—going from John Ball to Noseley, from Walton Holt to Coton House and Brownsover, so that we almost always had a long journey home on Monday.

Season 1866-67.

The best days may be shortly summed up as follows:—November 1st, 1866, Great Stretton. Found an old fox at Glen Gorse, no check for 25 minutes, then only one for a minute, raced their fox the whole way, killing in 1 hour 15 minutes, the distance on the ordnance map being 11 miles; we must have covered at least 15.

The brush of the fox which gave the field so good a run is to-day in as good a state of preservation as when severed, and is treasured by Mr. Tailby, amongst many other trophies of the Chase. Its ivory handle bearing the inscription: "Glenn Gorse to Launde Park Wood, November 1st, 1866. 1 hour 15 minutes."

On 12th November, Shearsby; tremendous field out. Found brace of foxes in John Ball, ran one towards Saddington, up to Fleckney, by the canal to Saddington . . . by Smeeton to Gumley, but did not kill, found again, ran by Lauton but lost him, drew an osier bed near Smeeton; found, went away up to Gumley Gorse . . . ran up to Lauton Hills running very hard, and there we found the Pytchley Hounds, having come from Brampton Wood; the hounds joined in and killed the fox together. Very good 45 minutes. We have no doubt it was our fox ! ! !

8th December, Barrow-on-the-Hill. Capital day, running 2 hours 45 minutes, and killed our fox in the Cottesmore country.

27th December. Met at Stackley. Found Glenn Gorse, ran very hard by Stretton Hall . . . and to ground.

"One of the Finest Hunting Runs I ever saw, covering 30 miles of ground—3 hours 25 minutes."

The above is the description of a run from Dalby Spinney (met at Somerby, 2nd February, 1867).

Summary.

Neither good nor bad season. Weather extremely wet, and yet the scent as a rule has not been good. Wind and storms have been our greatest enemies, and these, combined with the

enormous fields out on bad scenting days, have rendered our sport not so good as, with the wet season, we had a right to expect.

Number of days	cub hunting -	27	killed 30
„	„ regular hunting	67	„ 42
Total run to ground -		25	

Season 1867-68.

A Good Day.

1868.

February 6th. Met at Kibworth Hall; a tremendous field—for the Harborough Ball—looked more like a stag-hunt than anything else. Drew Sheepthorns and all the Langton Spinnies blank. Found at Langton Caudle, ran almost to Glooston, bore to the right by Cranoe . . . over Welham Road, by the river side, over the bridge, over the railway at Medbourne Bridge, over the Ashley Road, and they ran him to ground on Ashley Hill after a very good 50 minutes. Put a terrier in, bolted, and killed him. Drew Slawston blank; found at Keythorpe Wood, ran almost to Goadby, back through Hallaton Wood, over Hallaton bottom, through Ram's Head over Turnpike. . . over Tugby Road, ran head up to Rolleston Gorse, through Noseley Wood, where they ran on through Noseley Lodge plantations, over Stonton Brook, up to Stonton Wood, through Glooston Wood and away again for Keythorpe Wood, when we had to stop as it was dark, and they had been running 2 hours 20 minutes.

Résumé of Season, 1867-68.

We finished on 4th April the worst season I have had, which, with the stormy weather, the absence of scent, and the unruly fields of horsemen, combined with the badness of the foxes in the Monday country, we could never secure a run of sport. Of course we had a few good days. The Tuesday country showed us the most sport and the best foxes.

The Master meets with a Serious Fall.

I was laid up with a bad fall from the 24th December, and missed three days' hunting. "Slouch" fell with me at the

Twyford Brook (slipped, I expect), threw her head up and almost dislocated my jaw, giving me a very bad wound, which had to be stitched up, and a severe concussion of the brain. I did not leave my bed for ten days.

Total days hunted - -	94
Foxes killed - - -	64
Foxes run to ground - -	36

Season 1868-69.

Point of 17 Miles.

1869.

January 19th. Met at Owston. Found the line of a disturbed fox in the Punch Bowl, ran down the hill, over road up to Dalby Gardens, down to the Dalby Road, along the meadows, over the steeple-chase ground . . . almost to Stapleford, over the river up to Burbridge's covert, when I expect we changed our fox . . . hounds divided, and one couple went on towards Melton; we stuck to the pack; ran through Croxton Park . . . down the hill, when again we had two foxes before us, up to Braunston, here the fox was seen dead beat, but he got up to Croxton kennel, and the people made such a noise in the village the hounds were unable to get out of the Parson's garden, that we lost him after a very fine run of over 17 miles.

January 21st. Met at Houghton. Goodall not out. Found a fox in a ploughed field at back of Evington Hall; very fine hunting run of 2 hours 17 minutes.

February 18th. Met at Tugby Toll Bar. Lot of people out; found a good fox at Vowe's Gorse. Best day's sport this season; verg good 38 minutes in the morning, followed by 1 hour 50 minutes in the evening. Killed our second fox at 5-30. Horses all terribly beat, several had to be left out. "Shamrock" could only just raise a trot, and he was the freshest of my establishment ! ! !

Résumé of Season, 1868-69.

This has been altogether the best season I remember. Foxes all flyers, and we were only stopped two days by frost. The

country would not stand four days a week, so that in the latter part we had to hunt only three days. I never knew the foxes so good. The season ends early, 27th March, as the country is exhausted, though the ground rides well, and there is a deep snow on this day. We have killed a fair average of foxes, and have had more than a fair average of sport. It seems an anomaly to finish hunting with a deep snow on the ground, but we must look to the future as well as the present, and I hope we may have as good a season next year.

Number of days cub hunting	23	Regular hunting -	76=99
Foxes killed - - -	25	Foxes killed - -	37=62
Foxes run to ground - -	9	Foxes run to ground	40=49

Résumé of Season 1869-70.

One of the worst seasons I remember. What with frost, bad scent and dry ground, we never had any succession of sport, and never killed so few foxes. They were very plentiful, and we have left a good stock for another year, which I trust may be more successful.

Number of days cub hunting -	20	91
„ „ Regular hunting -	71	
Foxes killed cub hunting - -	20	49
„ regular hunting - -	29	
Foxes run to ground cub hunting -	6	47
„ „ Regular hunting	41	

Season 1870-71.

Clinking Run from Norton Gorse.

1870.

October 25th. Met at Norton-by-Galby. Found a good show of foxes in Norton Gorse, got away with one, ran by Galby down to Frisby, by Allen's Lodge, up to Billesdon Road, over Skinner's farm, bore to the left over the brook into the brook meadow (on own farm), left Skeffington Vale on the right, by Gardener's cottage, over Skeffington High Fields, running very hard, over the Turnpike by Lord Berner's farm building, away as if for Loddington Redditch, headed to the right, over the road

up to Ram's Head, where he got to ground after as good a gallop of six miles in 28 minutes as I wish to see. Strong line and good pace. Found again in Keythorpe Wood, ran up to Goadby, bore to the left, through Glooston Wood, back to Goodby and Keythorpe Wood, where we gave him up after a very hard day.

Mr. Tailby's Kennel.

In November, 1870, Mr. Tailby's kennel consisted of 50 couples of hounds, viz. :—

NO. OF HOUNDS.	AGE.
2	7 years.
10	6 ,,
10	5 ,,
14	4 ,,
14	3 ,,
19	2 ,,
31	1 ,,
50 Couples.	

Old Hounds	34½ Couples.
Young ,,	15½ ,,

They included descendants from the original selection made from the pack previously owned by Mr. Richard Sutton—a draft from the Pytchley and a few couples purchased from Mr. Collier, which were crossed with hounds subsequently introduced from The Belvoir, Lord Kesteven's, Sir Wm. Watkin Wynn's, and other kennels.

At a recent interview, Mr. Tailby informed the writer that his kennel contained a good deal of Cheshire blood; that he used to go and stay frequently with Sir. W. W. Wynn, and thought very highly of this strain.

The following selection will afford some idea of the composition of the kennel at this date.

Age.	Name.	Sire.	Dam.
7 years -	Pilgrim -	Lord Kesteven's Plunder -	Spiteful
6 ,, -	Fearless -	Mr. Fitzwilliam's Forester -	His Torment.
6 ,, -	Manager -	,, ,, Sportsman	His Madcap
5 ,, -	Chanticleer	Berkeley Cromwell - -	Castanet
5 ,, -	Chaser -		
5 ,, -	Namesake	Belvoir Comus - -	Nancy
4 ,, -	Fancy -	Oakley Faustus - -	Nancy
3 ,, -	Clasper -	Sir W. W. Wynn's Chaser -	His Famous
3 ,, -	Cruel -		His Darling
3 ,, -	Dulcet -	,, ,, ,, Romeo -	His Dewdrop
3 ,, -	Pastime -	,, ,, ,. Painter -	His Gaylass
3 ,, -	Rataplan -	Mr. Muster's Nigel -	His Rarity
2 ,, -	Nancy -	Belvoir Ringwood - -	Belvoir Norah
1 year -	Costly -	,, Contest - -	Wanton
1 ,, -	Dashwood	Belvoir Senator - -	Darling
1 ,, -	Dainty -		
1 ,, -	Damsel -		
1 ,, -	Dabchick -		
1 ,, -	Ringwood	Mr. Muster's Remus -	Margery
1 ,, -	Rival -		
1 ,, -	Ringlet -		
1 ,, -	Solitude -	Lord Poltimore's Stormer -	Fearless

15-Mile Point.

February 16th. Met at Ilston-on-the-Hill. Found at Norton Gorse, ran by Galby almost to Ilston, and lost him. Found again at Shangton Holt, ran over the road up to Ilston village, by New Inn, by Rolleston, through the spinnies near the house, away as if for Skeffington, bore to the right . . . over the brook up nearly to Keythorpe Wood, through Hallaton Wood, over Hallaton bottom, through brickyard plantation, over Hallaton Road, left Vowe's Gorse two fields on the left, down to Horninghold; left the village on the right, straight through Alexton Wood, through Wardley Wood, over the Turnpike, through Ayston Spinnies up to Ridlington, down to Manton Brook, alongside it, by Manton Station, bore to the left up to Lyndon Wood, through it, and he got to ground in a field

beyond, after a very fine run of 2 hours 30 minutes; 15-mile point.

Bad Accident to Goodall.

February 18th. Met at Ridlington. Found at Manton Gorse, said to be a vixen; went as far as the brook and came back; left her. Goodall got a bad fall at a double post and rail. Found again at Wardley Wood, ran over the hill to Uppingham, over the road, along the bottom up to Glaston Gorse, away for Wing, by Manton Station, through Preston Spinney, up to Ayston Spinney, where we lost him after a very good gallop. Found again in Alexton Wood, ran through Wardley Wood, over the Turnpike up to Preston village, away as if for Glaston Gorse, bore to the right, ran the Glaston Road, back to the Ayston cross roads, where we lost him after a very good gallop.

Best Run of the Season—1 hr. 22 min.—distance 15 Miles.

March 17th. Bye-day, could not hunt yesterday on account of the snow; drew Norton Gorse and Shangton Holt blank. Found a disturbed fox at Stonton Wood, ran by Glooston Wood, bore to the right over Cranoe and Glooston Road, through Dent's Spinney, over Stonton and Cranoe Road up to Langton Caudle, where they caught him after a good 20 minutes. Found again at Langton Caudle, went away very fast, over Cranoe Road, through Dent's Spinney, left Glooston village on the left, Glooston Wood on the left, through Rippon's stackyard, by Hallaton Wood over Hallaton bottoms, down to Old Keythorpe, up almost to Keythorpe, back again down the hill for Keythorpe Hall, by the stables, over the Turnpike, skirted Loddington Redditch, up to Launde Big Wood, straight through it (time 52 minutes, distance 9 miles). Here we changed foxes, ran along the gulley, left Launde Park Wood on the right and the Lodge on the left, along the hog-back half way to Ridlington, turned down the hill by Belton Spinney leaving Belton on the left, over the Uppingham Road, by Alexton Mill, and they ran him to ground within a field of the mill in another 30 minutes, making 1 hour 22 minutes. Good run!!

Summary of Season 1870-71.

The first part very bad, succeeded by seven weeks of frost; the latter part being good; the snow having saturated the ground the scent lay better, and strange to say, March was the best month of the season. The chief incident of the season was Goodall's fall coming from Manton Gorse, whereby he was laid up for the last two months of the season, and I had to hunt the hounds myself, killing 14 foxes.

Number of days cub hunting -	23	89
„ „ regular hunting -	66	
Foxes killed cub hunting - -	23	55
„ regular hunting - -	32	
Foxes run to ground cub hunting -	11	50
„ „ regular hunting	39	

Season 1871-72.

Cub hunting on the whole has not been good; scent has been very bad, and foxes would always go to ground. The ground at the same time rode well, fences more blind than ever I saw them. The last three weeks we let hounds go anywhere they would, so that it has been in fact regular hunting though we did not advertise. Found lots of foxes, especially in the Monday and Thursday countries.

On September 4th 6 couple of hounds picked up poison, one died. On 25th October Goodall unfortunately broke his collar bone.

The Run of the Season.

1871.

November 16th. Met at Tugby Toll Bar; foggy. Found in Tugby Wood, ran very quick through Loddington Redditch up to Launde Park Wood, back towards Loddington, away for Launde Park Wood, out on the Cole's Lodge side almost to Withcote, by the Lover's Walk, through Launde Big Wood, over Loddington Road, bore to the right through planting of Lord Berner's, through Butts' planting, running as hard as they could through Skeffington Wood from end to end, out on Tilton side, over Brown's farm, over Tilton Road, by Turnbull's farm, under Tomlin's Spinney, up to the field next Freer's

stables at the Coplow; here he was headed, bore to the right along the brook side, up to Turnpike, crossed between Toll-gate and the hill, over Billesdon bottom almost to Billesdon, leaving it just on the left, up to Long Spinney, along it by New Inn, bore to the left for Rolleston, and they pulled him down at the back of Skinner's house after one of the best runs I ever saw. Time about 2 hours.

Fox Jumps from Roof of Farm Building.

1872.

February 1st. Met at Thurnby Court; large meet; all Leicester! Found at Norton Gorse; ran up to Stretton Spinnies, where a fresh fox jumped up; ran up to Houghton, back by Gaulby, through Norton Gorse, round by Norton Spinnies into a farm-yard in Norton, where he jumped off the roof of a building into a lane full of horsemen. Went back to the covert, and they killed him.

Hounds have to Swim to Covert.

April 2nd. Met at East Norton; bye-day; torrents of rain. The hounds had to swim to covert in going over Alexton Brook. I never knew the country so wet. We found a brace ot foxes in Alexton Wood but could do no good with them, as there was not an atom of scent, and it poured with rain the whole day. Drew Wardley and Stoke end blank.

Termination of Mr. Tailby's connection with part of the Cottesmore country.

Résumé of Season 1871-72.

So ends my connection with the Cottesmore country. We have had the best season I ever remember. Country very deep, so that hounds could always beat horses; foxes in great abundance, almost too much so; woodland foxes very good and very stout, especially from Wardley Wood. What I shall do without my woodlands next year I don't know; it will be an uphill game with no woods to break hounds in. Not been very lucky in killing foxes as we were always changing, but we have been lucky in killing no vixens.

Goodall leaves me to hunt the Queen's stag-hounds, and I

must take the horn myself; and so good-bye to the best season I ever saw—may we have as good a season next year.

Number of days cub hunting -	28	107
„ „ regular hunting -	79	
Foxes killed cub hunting - -	17	49
„ regular hunting -	32	
Foxes run to ground cub hunting -	18	49
„ „ regular hunting	31	

I may here state that in the preceding November, 1871, Mr. Tailby had announced his intention to retire at the end of this season. A meeting of the members of the Quorn Hunt (convened by letter), was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicester. The Earl of Wilton in the Chair. After considerable discussion, during which Sir Arthur Hazlerigg said :—

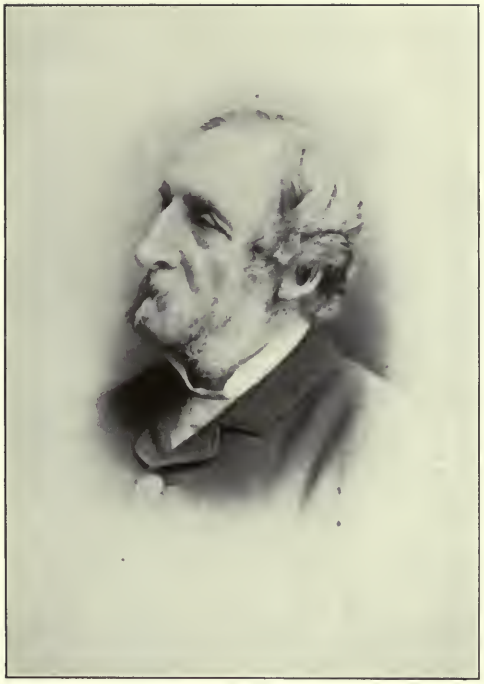
> " This meeting seems to ignore what was done by the gentlemen on the Harborough side. For fifteen years they were left in the lurch, and to their own resources to hunt the country; the covert owners, therefore, feel that they are now quite free to choose their own Master; and at a recent meeting they were almost unanimous on the subject."

Lord Grey de Wilton, observing that there appeared to be considerable difference of opinion on the subject, moved, and Col. Burnaby seconded :—

> " That the question be submitted to the Committee, at Boodles, and that Mr. Tailby be written to requesting him to appoint a Committee to represent his views."

This was unanimously agreed to by the meeting, and a committee of five was appointed which simply made a protest.

At the earnest request of the Billesdon country, Mr. Tailby recalled his resignation, and this may possibly be the reason why the committee carried the matter no further—but let the cause have been that, or other—Mr. Tailby remained UNDISTURBED in the Billesdon country,



Sir Arthur Grey Hazlerigg, (12th) Bart.

Naudin, Photographer.

with the full approbation of the owners and occupiers, till the end of the season 1877-78. Twenty-two years.

In view of subsequent events which transpired I should here make it quite plain that when, in 1856, Sir John Trollope entered into an agreement with Mr. Tailby to hunt the portion of the Cottesmore now surrendered, there was a formal undertaking on the part of Mr. Tailby to give it up at any time should any member of the Lowther family desire to have it back, and when upon Lord Lonsdale hearing that Mr. Tailby intended to give up his hounds—and not till then—his lordship intimated that he desired to reclaim the country, it was relinquished without the slightest opposition.

With this brief explanatory statement I will complete the extracts from Mr. Tailby's Journal.

Season 1872-73.

Résumé of Cub hunting.

From the extreme quantity of rain the cub hunting has been very good. We have found lots of foxes everywhere, excepting the Stockerston Woods. The young hounds all enter, and we start to-morrow with 34 couples of bitches, 7 couple of which are this year's entry. We have killed 9 brace of foxes in 18 days' hunting, and run 3 brace to ground. We have had several good gallops across the open, though the country has been so blind we all came to grief more or less.

Summary of Season 1872-73.

I don't remember a better season, especially up to Christmas. Scent was good, foxes good, and ground very holding; hounds could always beat horses; never knew the country so deep all through. Found lots of foxes . . . Monday's country has done very well, and foxes have been much better than usual. Peatling has done well, and the two new coverts at Little Peatling and Ashby promise well for another year. Killed a fair amount of foxes, never found so many, all above ground owing to the drains being full of water. Horses done well; killed one, viz., "Widgeon"; "Tip-Top" gone wrong in his

wind. With these exceptions I think we have been pretty lucky.

Season 1873-74.

Finished our season in the Pychley woodlands on April 18th. More than an average good one. Good season for killing foxes, though not celebrated for any very brilliant runs, with a few exceptions. A quick gallop from Alexton Wood to Blaston, a very quick gallop from Walton Holt to Gilmorton, and killed him. Two good runs from Norton Gorse . . . Our Monday's country has done us very well . . . hunted almost three days every week.

Number of days hunted since November -	63
„ „ cub hunting „ -	17
Days hunted -	80
Foxes killed since November - - -	39
„ cub hunting since November -	21
Foxes killed -	60
Foxes run to ground since November - -	37
„ „ cub hunting since November	7
Foxes run to ground -	44

Season 1874-75.

Finished on April 13th the worst season I remember; what with frost, uncertain weather, dry spring and bad scents, everything has been against us. The same, however, has been the fate of all our neighbours, and also in other distant counties, so that I suppose we must not grumble. Hounds have worked well and tried very hard to make out a scent when there was none, and the entry has so far gone on very satisfactorily.

Number of days cub hunting -	22	75
„ „ regular hunting -	53	
Foxes killed cub hunting - -	29	57
„ regular hunting - -	28	
Foxes run to ground cub hunting -	22	51
„ „ regular hunting	29	

Season 1875-76.—My 20th as M.F.H.

1876.

April 8th. Finished our season—as good as any I can remember. Ground deep owing to continuous rains, consequently scent good—very good up to March, which set in very boisterous and scent was not so good. Over 40 couple of bitches have done very well and killed more foxes than usual . . . We had several good days in November, then frost and snow, after that a very good fortnight. Frost and snow again in January, after that the best day from the Hardwicks, and killed him in the house-keeper's room at Stretton Hall. Good sport in February, especially on 26th from Alexton, when we ran 14½ miles on the map from Ayston Spinney.

Number of days cub and regular hunting	-		80
Foxes killed	„	„ -	68
„ run to ground	„	„ -	33

Season 1876-77.

17-Mile Point in 2 hours 20 minutes.

1876.

December 8th. Met at Arnesby. Found at Ashby, ran as if for Little Peatling, up to Gilmorton Mill, bore to the right for Walton village, left it just on the right, away for Walton Holt, and on . . . as if for North Kilworth, down to the canal, along the towing path by Kilworth Station, on for Welford . . . ran by Wheeler Lodge, through Sulby Gardens to Sibbertoft, away almost to Long Hold, going as if for Tally-Ho, left it about a mile on the right, and ran behind Clipstone, where we gave him up after a very fine run of 2 hours 20 min.

Fatal Accident to Mr. Tailby's Horse.

On 11th December hounds met at Gumley, and found in the gorse. During the course of the run Mr. Tailby's horse fell upon a harrow, which must have been carelessly left in the field wrong side up, the tines pierced him in nine places, from the effects of which he died the following week.

Résumé.

The 6th April saw the end of a not very satisfactory season. good runs we have had and very long tiring days, the ground up to the horses' hocks. The country full of foxes—too many —so that each day when we had one half-beat, up we had another, and so on all day and every day, the result being that we did not kill so many as usual. The field terribly interfering, so that I had to give up the place of Huntsman to Christian, in order to look after the field, and he was so interfered with by the field that he failed to kill his foxes. I never in my experience knew the country so deep all through; wet through every day, horses terribly knocked about.

Season 1877-78.—Last with Mr. Tailby as Master.

Commenced cub hunting on September 6th, with 9½ couple of young hounds in the entry, and R. Summers for Huntsman.

Run of the Season—18 Miles in 1 hour 40 minutes.

1878.

February 18th. Met at Burton Overy. Found in the spinney, ran to Wistow Gorse, by the Hall, over the canal up to Glenn, and they killed him after 30 minutes. Found in Glenn Gorse, ran to Oadby Lane, to Stoughton, by the Hall to Knighton, and almost to Leicester (old) Race Course; by Oadby to Glenn Gorse—time up to this 45 minutes—dwelt about five minutes in Glenn Gorse, went away with a fresh fox along the Belt by Oadby Toll Bar as if for Newton Harcourt, by Glenn and Glenn Oaks over Burton Brook, over Carlton Brook, up to Kibworth Spinnies; bore down for Kibworth Church, was headed, ran to left . . . up to Langton Hall, by Thorpe Langton, over Welham Lane . . . where we lost him. Time from Glenn 50 minutes. Had we killed him it would have been the best run I ever saw.

Final Gallop as Master.

April 4th. The last day of the season. Hounds met at Ilston. Chopped a fox in Shangton Holt. Found again, ran by the Hardwicks, Noseley up to Glooston Wood, on to Stonton

Wood, where were two foxes; ran by Cranoe and Dent's Spinney . . . bore to the left and lost him near Cranoe. Found again at Sheepthorns, ran round by Carlton and Burton earths to Kibworth and lost. So many litters of foxes about we went to Rolleston. Found in the Pond Spinney at 5-15; ran very quickly down to Skeffington Vale, over Hart's farm, by Ashlands, round it, by Ilston on the left through Galby Spinnies, by Norton Gorse—on the left we were holloaed to a fox over the brook for Houghton, which was a fresh one, but having gone on from Galby it was too late. A very good gallop; 30 minutes. *The last, alas ! ! !*

Résumé of Season 1877-78.

This has been a remarkably open season, during which we were only stopped three or four days. Sport has been very fair, foxes very plentiful, and scent better than an average, with the exception of the last month when the ground was dry and hard.

A season fraught with some good-will, but, I fear, many bickerings and dissatisfactions. Satiated with too much hunting and too open weather, grumbling is the natural result of sportsmen (?) so affected.

The new huntsman, Summers, at the beginning of the season did everything that was right—killed his foxes, rode to his hounds, and was a success. Then came a revulsion of feeling. The over-indulged began to think him slow, he couldn't ride! he couldn't gallop! he couldn't kill his foxes! All this was to me gall and wormwood, and it worried me so much that I decided to give up the country. I felt that I had done my best for the country, and they were not satisfied, so I sent in my resignation; and that again brought on great discord, as to who was to be my successor. Coupland was first in the field and got many friends thereby. Cunard came later on to hunt the country in its present boundaries. He, of course, was hailed by me and all the farmers with great enthusiasm, as we did not expect to find a man to hunt the same country that I had just resigned. Most of the covert owners are for Cunard, but some three or four for Coupland, and so we are all at

discord. Cunard has bought my hounds for £2100, and takes possession of them April 8th. I wish him success.

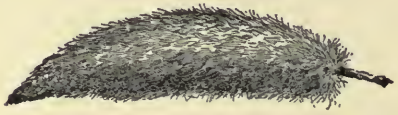
I cannot retire without expressing to one and all—covert owners, farmers, subscribers, and peasants—how grateful I am for their support and interest for the last 22 years. I have enjoyed a very happy reign, and cannot but say that I resign the hounds with the deepest regret. My occupation gone, I expect I shall sink into a worn-out and premature old man. God grant that it may not be so.

And now good-bye for ever to my office, and to the happiest period of my career.

W. W. T.

April 7th, 1878.

Number of days hunting	-	77
,, foxes killed	-	48
,, ,, run to ground	-	36



PROMINENT FOLLOWERS, &c.

Amongst prominent followers of Mr. Tailby's hounds in the sixties I can never forget Capt. Frank Sutton, who then resided at Carlton Curlieu Hall, for he made my father a present of the first pony I ever bestrode! old "Tom," as he was called, was a handsome grey with long flowing mane and tail, but though he stood fully 14 hands and was rather more of a cob than a pony, one could not easily imagine him as a charger! nevertheless, he did possess a military record, having, so memory recalls, served throughout the campaign in the Crimea, although as the Captain was in the R.H. Guards, I fancy Tom must have gained his laurels when the property of some other gallant owner! Be this as it may, he was destined to add to them in the field where, amongst quadrupeds of his type, he easily kept a good place, and when an obstacle proved too big to jump generally succeeded in pushing through or rolling over! hence, upon at least one occasion, his endurance and dexterity were rewarded by the brush; decorating the saddle at the end of the day.

I am unable to recount the Captain's exploits in the field, but have little doubt that others could bear witness to his being as well able to hold his own as other members of his family.

Lord Berners, a large cover owner and constant supporter of the hunt, comes next amongst boyhood's recollections. Upon an occasion when I accompanied my father to lunch at Keythorpe, a notable performance, as related by his Lordship, greatly impressed my juvenile imagination. His Lordship, who was very fond of farming and afforestation, was, I believe, President of the Leicestershire Agricultural Society, at any rate, that year he took the Chair at the Annual Dinner, held at the "Bell Hotel," Leicester, and when he rose made something like the following statement to those present:—"Gentlemen, the

wool of which the coat upon my back is made was growing this morning upon the backs of my sheep!" His Lordship then proceeded to explain how he had arranged that as the shearers clipped the sheep, the various tradesmen, sorters, combers, cleaners, dyers, weavers, and tailors, should be in attendance, each waiting in readiness to do his part; his Lordship submitting to be measured and fitted, and finally appearing in a coat which had surely never been equalled for the rapidity of the various processes through which it was ultimately fashioned.

A very amusing story Lord Berners used to tell, proves the truth of the old adage that the most indulgent of Masters is but rarely a hero to his own valet. One evening Lord Berners had driven to Kibworth Station intending to go to town, but after waiting sometime in Kibworth altered his plans and decided to return home. In the interval his coachman had been an excellent customer in the tap-room of the village inn, and was manifestly incapable of mounting the box. Without more ado his Lordship got into the coachman's coat, placed the coachman inside the carriage, himself mounted the box and so drove up to his Hall door, whereupon the manservant came out and greeting (as he thought) the coachman, exclaimed "Well! so the old devil's gone?" To which his Lordship replied "No, the old devil's here, and you can take your wages in the morning." However, when the morning came probably his Lordship relented and doubtless overlooked the offensive allusion.

The Hon. Fred and the Hon. Gussy Calthorpe, Mr. Ambrose de Lisle, who married Miss Fanny Sutton, Sir Richard's youngest sister; Mr. Banks Wright, and the Rev. H. Houson, from the Belvoir side, were often hunting at this period in high Leicestershire; the two latter used to visit at Skeffington Hall in the old Sutton days.

Mr. and Mrs. Bigge, who have for many years resided, and I am glad to hear are still living, at Torquay, succeeded Captain Sutton at Carlton, and were regular attendants

Mary, Duchess of Hamilton.

at the covert side. Mr. Bigge was one of the pioneers of Australian settlement, being the owner of a cattle station in Queensland called "Mount Brisbane," which had twenty miles of frontage to the principal river and might for size be compared to an English county. In 1876 Mr. Bigge obligingly favoured the writer with several introductions to his friends in that sunny clime, which insured a hearty welcome and such hospitality as is invariably extended to the stranger in that part of the globe, with or without such a passport.

The old "Squatter" used to relate an amusing experience of his out there in the "early days." The Governor and his lady gave a reception, but the score of male guests when assembled could only muster *one* dress coat between them, and it consequently had to do duty for each loyal subject in succession. The tall, the short, the slender, and they of more ample proportions, all had to "line up" in the ante-room and "take their turn" in paying their respects to the Queen's representative. Whether they succeeded in maintaining a becoming deportment or preserving their gravity, deponent sayeth not! Proving that the best thing for the "inside of a man" is the "outside of a horse," Mr. Bigge, when approaching four score years, made a wager—and won it too—that he would walk from Kibworth Hall to the Railway Station, about a mile, in twelve minutes, or at the rate of five miles an hour.

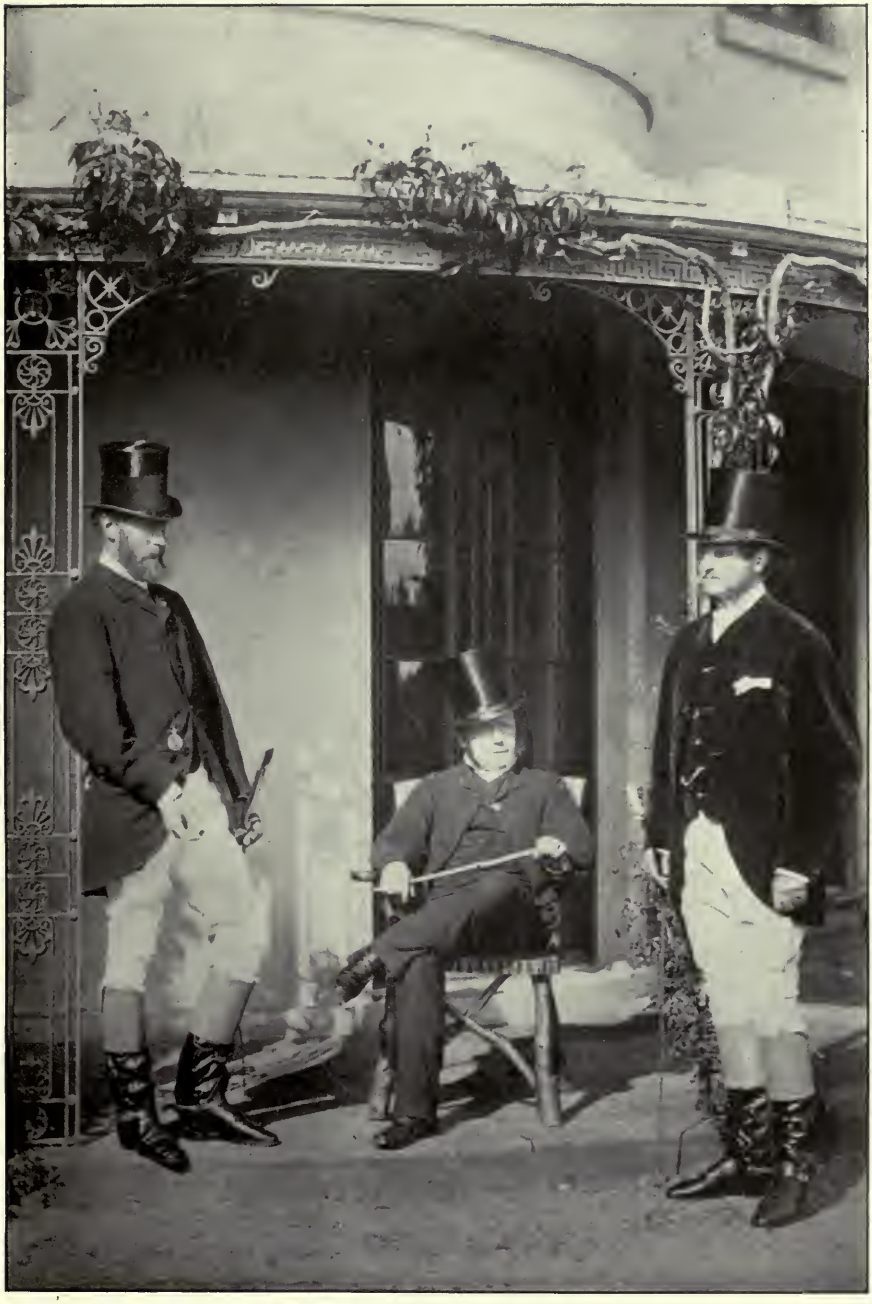
The Hon. Alan Pennington (who, alas! has recently passed away) used, with Sir Wm. Milner, to hunt from Billesdon, and with the Master and huntsman were generally to be found in the first flight. Nothing gave the writer greater satisfaction in his "teens" than when the fortune of the day, combined with youth and light weight, enabled him on a game old horse, once not unknown over "the sticks," to keep within measurable distance of this well mounted quartet.

Amongst many men, all turned out well, few possessed

a more distinguished appearance or rode better cattle than the late Col. (then Capt.) Baillie; in fact to him and his neighbour, Mr. Arkwright (they erected Ilston Grange and The Ashlands respectively and at about the same time), may be attributed in great measure the social popularity as a hunting centre which, after their advent, this part of the country speedily attained. Glen Hall was at this period, or soon thereafter, occupied as a hunting-box by that all-round sportsman, Sir Charles Nugent, but although he hunted from the Hall for a few seasons the writer's recollections relate only to the impression created upon him by hearing the Baronet, on the approach of the shooting season, give old Lofley, the gunsmith, of Leicester, an order for "three quarters of a ton of powder"! and the expression of his partiality for costly cigars!

One of the oldest members of the Hunt, and most regular attendant at the covert side, was the late George Vere Lucas-Braithwaite, who used to hunt from Stackley House, with Mr. Tailby and Sir Bache, and frequently with the Quorn on a Friday; but after succeeding to the family estates in the counties of Rutland, Lincoln and York in 1888, he hunted from Edith Weston Hall with the Cottesmore and Fitzwilliam. Mrs. Braithwaite, their son Capt. (now Major) Braithwaite, and youngest daughter, who became the wife of her cousin, Col. Henry Holmes Costobadie, R.H.A., the present owner of Stackley, were also well known with the Billesdon Hunt. Mr. Braithwaite or "The Champion" as he was familiarly termed, possessed a wonderful eye for a line across country, and being intimately conversant with every part of the shires, was a good mentor for anyone, provided he could ride, to follow. He was one of the committee appointed to decide the fate of the Billesdon country after the resignation of Mr. Tailby, and as he was in other respects rather a remarkable man, perhaps his connection with the Hunt deserves more than a passing reference.

At an early age, whilst in the act of getting over a stile



CAPT. JAMES BAILLIE. REV. FREDERICK THORP. CAPT. FRANK SUTTON.

John Burton & Son,
Photographers.

when out shooting, the trigger of his gun was caught by a twig, and he had the misfortune to lose his right arm; which accident happening on the day he received a commission in the army, direct from the (then) Duke of York, at once put an end to all prospect of a military career. He was therefore compelled to content himself with the ordinary avocations of a country gentleman, hunting and shooting being his chief pursuits. All are agreed that it takes plenty of pluck and nerve for the ordinary man to ride straight across Leicestershire, and most men find quite enough to do for both hands in controlling and guiding their mounts at the pace the flyers set when the scent is good. These qualities must surely have been super-abundant in Mr. Braithwaite, who, it can be imagined, was at the greatest disadvantage in possessing only one arm, either to steady his steed, or if need be, save his head when the inevitable "cropper" came—as come it must! Nevertheless "The Champion," riding with judgment and discretion, was never known to shirk from a thought of possible consequences. In fact he was never so happy as when "schooling" a young horse, and often rode in the jumping contests at Islington and in local Agricultural Shows, when he proved a formidable competitor. I will not attempt to enumerate a list of his accomplishments, but may add that he was a very good shot, using a gun, the stock of which was specially made to fit the left shoulder; he generally succeeded in singling out and bringing down his birds right and left; he played a good game at tennis, wrote legibly with the left hand, and with the aid of a knife screwed into an artificial hand could cleverly dissect any poultry or game that came to the table. He had the same preference for a scarlet coat which exhibited distinct signs of wear and weather, as distinguished counsel profess for their frayed and well-worn robes; and when for a few seasons scarlet became, as he considered, unduly "en evidence," he adopted a black coat. Mr. Braithwaite possessed a kind and humorous disposition, being very fond of a joke, and being of a witty turn of mind. For instance,

on one occasion when a young man got amongst the hounds at the meet and his horse unfortunately struck out, just touching a hound sufficiently to make it yelp; taken by surprise the youth exclaimed to Mr. B. "I never knew him to do it *before*!" to which Mr. B. facetiously replied "Did you ever know him do it *behind*?"

One of the best known and most highly esteemed members of the hunt was Major Bethune, of Burton Overy, who as a subaltern, was initiated into the mysteries of the sport he loved by his friend Squire Freeman of Ratton, then Master of the Southdown Hunt, a forbear of the present Lord Willingdon, himself ex-Master of the East Sussex. A man of remarkably fine physique, standing 6 feet 4 inches, and well proportioned, the Major was noted in his youth as an exponent of the noble art of self-defence. Upon one memorable occasion, when attending a military race meeting. some roughs were busy making off with the regimental plate, the young officer so vigorously handled a few of them that the crowd became much exasperated, one man declaring "Its all very fine for a great chap like you to "knock us fellows about, but we could easily fetch a man "who is on the course who would soon give you a good "licking"; to which Bethune, 'spoiling for a fight,' answered with alacrity "All right, go and fetch him." A few minutes after Bethune found himself face to face with Baldwin, the celebrated Irish pugilist, who undertook, as he thought, to amuse the crowd; but although during the encounter Bethune sustained a badly broken nose, which disfigured for life his otherwise handsome features, he succeeded in "knocking out" the professional! albeit luck partly favoured the amateur, who, by skilful "leg work," managed to manœuvre so as to get the sun (which at the time was shining brilliantly) in Baldwin's eyes, and to the disconcerting effect of Old Sol, the gallant Major used to attribute the opportunity by which he gained the victory.

"The" Major, as he was popularly known, although built upon so liberal a scale, by constant exercise retained

a good figure. Nevertheless he required and always rode a weight-carrier, and in selecting his stud was no doubt inclined to sacrifice "blood" to "bone," but as he was getting into years and was no longer ambitious to be in the "first flight," he generally saw all the sport he desired, leaving it to others to make the pace. The Major used to sing many an old hunting ditty such as "The Clipper that Stands in the Stall at the Top," "John Peel," and "The Tantivy Trot," and when the port began to circulate, to take great pleasure in recounting the incidents and exploits of the day. When therefore he, his amiable consort, and charming daughter decided to leave Leicestershire for the South Coast, it need hardly be added they were very much missed by rich and poor alike.

In writing of the "old guard," I must not omit Mr. Geo. Coleman, who although of rather a reserved disposition, was quite a feature of the Billesdon Hunt. When not out hunting he usually had about half-a-dozen fox-terriers at his heels, of which he was said to be the best judge in the county.

At no period during Mr. Tailby's Mastership were hunting quarters and stabling so much in demand as in the early seventies, when Messieurs A. and C. de Murrieta occupied Mr. Beardsley's place, and were reported to have a stud of about 120 horses scattered up and down between Harborough and Glenn. Not only was every stable occupied, but every available cow-shed! was also requisitioned by these generous adherents of the chase.

At this time the field would usually include, besides the gentlemen already alluded to, the Earl of Morton and his son, the present Lord; the Hartopps of Dalby, Lord Downe, Mr. Barclay, M.P., and Capt. Barclay, who bred "Bertram," by "The Duke."—[By the bye, when a foal, Bertram got into an orchard at Scraptoft, and ate a quantity of green apples which had fallen from the trees, causing a severe attack of colic: fortunately he was dis-

covered by Mr. Sheppard, who sat up with him all night, and, Mr. Barclay used to say, saved the colt's life.]—Sir F. Johnstone, Col. Burnaby, Lord Wilton, Major Clifton, Col. Arthur, Mr. Featherstonhaugh, Capt. Robertson, Capt. Hazlerigg, Capt. Wingfield, Capt. Whitmore, Col. Wigram, Lord Rosslyn, Capt. Wombwell, Capt. Tryon, Capt. Coventry, and Messrs. Mills, Watson, Powell, Hall, Farquhar, Corbett Holland, Perkins, Gower, Farmer, Duncan, Cochrane, Hungerford, Hay, and Fludyer, besides the regular residents such as Sir Henry Halford, Major Freer, Mr. Palmer, Sir Frederick Fowke, Mr. Rowland Hunt, Mr. Finch Dawson, Capt. Pearson, and others.

In dealing with a period embracing half-a-century, alas! it only requires a glance to realize that the majority of sportsmen whose names are comprised in the foregoing list have passed away; but there are "still a few remaining to remind us of the past," who, we may be sure, continue to take a lively interest in anything relating to the scenes of their former pursuits.

REMARKABLE JUMPS.

In the early days of the Billesdon or "Beautiful Hunt" as it was called, Col. Gosling of the Blues and his brother (the hero of the following adventure), the head of the great banking firm, were ever to the fore.

I remember on one occasion, when the hounds were running hard in the direction of the Coplow, they crossed the brook between Frisby and Billesdon, Mr. Gosling being the only one to follow them straight over; for although during the greater part of its course the brook is very easily negotiated, at the spot where it confronted Mr. Gosling, it is approached by a steep bank, a thick-set fence with a big drop to the opposite side, the landing being at an equally acute angle, the brook running in what may be termed a ravine. Too late to pull up or turn aside at the pace he was travelling, it was "neck or nothing," and right well did both man and horse acquit themselves, for both landed in safety on the farther slippery bank. The whole conntry side were attracted to the spot the following day, and many were the expressions of wonder that the horse's back was not broken, and that he and his venturesome rider were not precipitated into the stream.

The Three Meltonians.

The hounds being in full cry, the writer once had the luck to see three young bloods deliberately sail over a five-barred gate and the posts which flanked it on either side. The centre nimrod took the gate, leaving a post each to his comrades. All three, needless to add, were splendidly mounted, full of verve, and possibly well provided with "jumping powder," and to see them all rise in the air at

the same moment, clear the obstacle and gallop forward, was a revelation of pluck and horsemanship.

The Leader of the Light Brigade.

Of Lord Cardigan, one of the straightest riders and principal supporters of the Billesdon Hunt, I possess a unique and early recollection. The hounds were running to the south of the village of Norton in the direction of Gaulby, my younger brother and self scampering after them on foot, when, just as we were crawling between the lower bars of a stiff ox-rail fence adjoining a large yew tree at the corner of an old-fashioned garden, his Lordship suddenly hove in sight, made straight for the fence, and calling out to us to " sit still,"—or " keep quiet,"—the next thing we became aware of was a horse and its rider towering immediately above us, fortunately clearing the fence and ourselves beneath!

SPORTING PARSONS of the OLD SCHOOL.

ALTHOUGH there is no mention in Old Testament history of the horse or dog being used in hunting by the Jews, Josephus records that Herod was a great sportsman; and the addiction of the Franks in later centuries to the chase is evidenced by the frequency with which not only the laity, but also the clergy, were mentioned by the Provincial Councils as participating in hunting with "hounds, hawks and falcons"; and there are similar proofs of the habits of other Teutonic nations subsequent to the introduction of Christianity. In Roman history allusion is made to the pleasures of the chase (wild ass, boar, hare and fallow deer), but "not as the occupation of gentlemen, chiefly being left to inferiors and professionals."

Without attempting a treatise upon the history of hunting, it may be noted that the early inhabitants of Britain kept hunting dogs, Alfred the great being at an early age an expert in the "noble art" of hunting. The Anglo-Saxon Kings distinguished between the "higher" and the "lower" chase, the former being "expressly for the King," or "those upon whom he had bestowed the pleasure of sharing it," the latter only allowed to proprietors of land. In temp. Henry VIII. buckhounds were kenneled at Swinley, and in the reign of Charles II. (1684) a deer went away to Lord Petre's seat in Essex, "only five of the followers got to the end of this 70-mile run, one being the King's brother, the Duke of York."

In 35 Elizabeth (1593), Newland Manor, Batcombe, Dorset, was held at his death by John Minterne, Gentleman of the Queen, as of her honour of Gloucester, by Knight's Service.

In 37 Elizabeth, William Minterne and John Minterne junr., Gentlemen, were appointed to the office of "Woodward and Custos of all the woods in Dorset."

Sir Francis Wolley, M.P. for Hazelmere, son of Sir John Wolley, Latin Secretary to Queen Elizabeth, in 1609, bequeathed his Lordship of the Manor of Thorpe St. Mary, Surrey, to his cousin, the above William Minterne, Lord of the Manor of Batcombe and "Woodward and Custos of all the woods in Dorset," whose family in the female line—the Leigh-Bennetts—own the Manor at the present day.

This was a very important Court appointment, when the "wooden walls" constituted England's first line of defence, and the extensive forests were also closely preserved for the diversion of the Court.

In the Church of Batcombe, dedicated to St. Mary, is a chapel built as a burying place for the Minterne family, and in the south aisle, formerly belonging to the Minterne's of Newland, upon a broken stone which belonged to a monument now destroyed, were the arms of Minterne, viz.: "Azure, two bars barry ar. between three lions passant guardant or": the same as on a monument in Yetminster Church impaling Browne of Frampton Court.

Descendants of this ancient sporting family are to be found in the U.S.A., where the name is spelled Minturn; here they settled in 1620, and have attained considerable eminence as Senators, Judges, Lawyers and Merchants; their public spirit and philanthropy being manifested in the erection and endowment of hospitals and other institutions in the City of New York, and elsewhere.*

An 18th Century Sporting Parson.

In the "Alumni Oxoniensis" Members of the University of Oxford, 1715–1886 (by T. Foster, 1888), may be found the name of "Henry Mintern, matric. 10 March 1717, B.A. 1721," who was Rector of Cheddington, Dorset, 1723–41;

* Within the last half-century several members of the expatriated branch have become re-united to the Old Country by marriage into families who may be found in the Peerage, Baronetage, and landed gentry of Great Britain.

and by all accounts, like his forefathers, he was "much addicted to the chase."

Coming to more recent times, however, it is known that George III. was very fond of stag hunting; but the earliest mention of a pack of foxhounds, such as we understand that term to-day, is recorded in a letter which Lord Arundel wrote in 1833: "That his ancestor kept a pack of fox-" hounds between 1690–1700, which remained in the family " till 1782, when they were sold to Hugh Meynell of Quorn-" don Hall, Leicestershire."

Lord Wilton, in his "Sports and Pursuits of the English," says: "About the year 1750 hounds began to be entered solely to fox"; and in the "Field" (1875), is mentioned a horn inscribed "Thos. Boothby, Esq., Tooley " Park, Leicester. With this horn he hunted the first pack " of foxhounds then in England 55 years. Born 1677, " died 1752."

After this detour, we may take it that the most celebrated Sporting Parson of modern times, or at any rate the one whose life has been brought most conspicuously before the public through the publication of his charming memoirs some years ago, was the Rev. Jack Russell. Although I believe the reverend gentleman was seldom seen in the Shires, fortunately Mr. Tailby has preserved the record of a splendid run in which he participated. This memorable occasion was on the 1st February 1866, when, as Mr. Tailby describes in his Journal, hounds met at Ilston-on-the-Hill, when "the great sporting parson was out with us, and said he never saw so good a run in his life." It appears that—

> After drawing Norton Gorse blank, hounds found at Shangton Holt; ran through the Hardwicks, through Noseley Wood. almost to Keythorpe Wood, left it on the left by the Keythorpe Fishponds, through Ram's Head almost down to East Norton, bore up the hill, by Vowe's Gorse, leaving it on the right, away as if for Norton Hill, where a fresh fox jumped up before the hounds; ran to the left over the large pastures up to Horninghold Brook, crossed the Horninghold and Hallaton Road, ran very quick by Blaston Pasture, up the hill by Dent's Spinney,

up to Holt—here there was a little delay—hit him off again, ran through Holt Wood, through the Firs over by Easton Park almost to Merrivale Hall, bore to the right and ran into him in Blaston Pasture after as fine a hunting run of 2 hours and 50 minutes as I ever saw.

The Rev. Frederick Thorp, the excellent and much respected Rector of Burton Overy, Leicestershire, is, without question, the oldest hunting parson in the county, if not in England. Born in the year 1827, he, in July 1852, became Rector of the parish, and has thus held the living for 61 years. The Rev. Thomas Thorp, father of the present Rector, held the living from 1811 to 1851, and thus father and son have been Incumbents for more than 100 years.

Short in stature, but with plenty of strength to see out the longest day, of a cheery disposition, he always received a hearty welcome and friendly greeting at the "Meet." Strangers might at first fancy the reverend gentleman's manner, and the rapid jerky way in which he would cross-examine all and sundry, as being somewhat inquisitive, or even dictatorial; but upon further acquaintance this idiosyncrasy would be found to conceal a very kindly disposition and sincere regard for the happiness and welfare of all with whom he came in contact.

Mr. Thorp shared in most of the sport provided successively by the three Masters of the Billesdon Hunt. Someone once told him he'd break his neck one day unless he minded, and his retort was to this effect:—My brother broke his in the hunting field, and its not likely two in the same family would meet a similar fate—that's why he shoved along. Once, however, he had the misfortune for his horse to fall dead under him. In cases of this kind death is not always attributable to over-exertion, as a post-mortem usually reveals the existence of disease or of fatty degeneration of the heart, from which death might result

at any time, although of course any exertion or excitement would doubtless be a contributory cause.

The writer was once present at a Point-to-Point race meeting on the south coast, when two horses fell dead immediately after passing the post. In this connection, however, it may be remarked that no horse wanting in condition, or that has not undergone the necessary training, should be called upon to race four-and-a-half miles over a stiff hunting country.

On 24th June last the venerable Rector celebrated his 86th birthday, when, as may be imagined, he was the recipient of many tokens of respect and hearty congratulations.

The Rev. John Morpot Piercy, Vicar of Slawston, familiarly known by a play upon his second name as "Pot Piercy" was a regular follower to hounds in the early days of Mr. Tailby's mastership and was numbered with the heavy brigade. Upon one occasion hounds had been trying round Cranoe where that eminent scholar the Rev. Hill was Rector, when suddenly from the direction of the rectory the welkin rang with a loud view holloa; which quickly brought Mr. Tailby and the hounds upon the scene; when, behold, "Pot Piercy," greatly excited and gesticulating wildly, whilst he declared that he had seen a fox enter the Rectory garden, whereupon, hounds being admitted, out came "the fox" in the shape of one of old Rippon the farmer's sheep-dogs! whereat the Master was exceedingly wrath, and made use of certain exclamations, but fortunately no reporters were present!

Mr. Courtenay Spencer Foster had not actually taken Orders in the seventies when he resided in Leicestershire; neither by reason of his age would he strictly come into the category of Sporting Parsons of the Old School.

Nevertheless, as he was so well known in the hunting field and on the turf before he exchanged the pigskin for the pulpit, a brief reference to him can hardly fail to prove interesting.

The writer's first recollection of Mr. Foster was when he was supposed to be learning farming of Mr. John Richardson, of Gaulby, where he was a fellow pupil with Mr. Faulkner, who subsequently purchased the Ashlands of Mr. Arkwright; also of Mr. Worrall, who now resides at Wing.

Mr. Foster soon became known to the Vicar of Norton, between whom and the new comer there existed much in common. They both claimed Cambridge as their Alma Mater, and also St. John's as their College; their acquaintance rapidly ripened into friendship, and the Vicarage soon became an open house to the stranger. Although there was as great physical difference between them as between David and Goliath, Mr. Foster being of medium height and slight build, by whose side the Vicar appeared like a giant, at Cambridge each in his day had, strange to say, been awarded prizes for similar athletic feats; but that which, as may be anticipated, most conduced to their present intimacy, was their mutual regard for the equine species, more especially for the type known as the thoroughbred.

After a brief sojourn at Gaulby, Mr. Foster gave up whatever ideas he had of farming and took a house with some stabling attached, at Burton Overy, where he began to indulge his inclination for racing in a modest manner. He employed a good trainer, a Scotsman: but always rode his own horses, hunting them also in the season. Mr. Foster proved himself to be a remarkably shrewd young man, a good judge of a horse, and expert jockey, for within a year, with "Lady Adeliza" he won the big event at Croxton Park, which many excellent sportsmen had vainly endeavoured to capture for twenty or thirty years! Mr. Foster purchased "Lady Adeliza," at Tattersall's

for 120 guineas, and refused £1200 for her immediately after the race; finally she broke down and was put to the stud, but whether as a brood mare she produced anything of merit, I cannot remember.

After placing many other events to his credit, Mr. Foster married, gave up his stud, and leaving Burton Overy decided to take Orders, which he soon after did; and, strange though it may seem, expressed himself as equally fond of his new as of his old vocation.

Mr. Foster was a brother of the late Mr. Montague Foster, the celebrated Naval Coach of Stubbington House, Hants., and although not the eldest son of his father, inherited the entailed estate under a peculiar and ancient law which the writer believes to be operative in only two parishes or lordships in England, by which the youngest takes the place of the eldest son. Mr. Foster used to say that this exception to the law of primogeniture had its origin in the fact that in these places, the Parson who performed the Marriage Service had not only the privilege of imprinting the first kiss upon the bride (a good old custom now seldom exercised), but furthermore, the additional privilege of sleeping with her the first night!

Supposing this to be correct, it would be interesting to know when the ancient custom became obsolete, as it seems there has been no abrogation of the law; and although presumably for generations past the "raison d'être," has disappeared, the youngest still takes precedence of the eldest, which goes to prove that the privilege was not always entirely disregarded!

NOTE.—Sir Arthur Percy Douglas, fifth Baronet, who died from injuries received in the recent railway disaster at Aisgill, was a brother-in-law of Mr. Courtenay Spencer Foster; and, sad to relate, was at the time journeying to visit the grave of his late wife, Mr. Foster's sister.

The Rev. J. C. DAVENPORT, who was born in 1805, and lived to the age of 84, was Rector of Skeffington for fifty-seven years, and hunted regularly for between sixty and seventy. He was well known not only in the Shires, but outside, and was a fine shot, a dexterous (fly) fisherman and an all-round sportsman of the best type.

Amongst other good stories told of the Rector is this:—he was a lover and wonderful judge of port, and amongst his social intimates was known as "Old Port," an obvious abbreviation of his patronymic. Well, at an Archidiaconal Meeting in Leicester, there was the usual pleasant function—a luncheon—and in due course the port was passed round. On its arrival at the old Rector of Skeffington, he filled his glass, with this aside to his neighbour (who was a former Incumbent of Hinckley, the Rev. H. Leney), "Ah! reached port at last! and then adding, "I think it must stay here," coolly put the decanter down on the floor by his chair. As was remarked afterwards, the treble play on the word "port" was worthy of Tom Hood.

The Rev. J. R. DAVENPORT, the present Rector of Skeffington, was born in 1848, and is a son of the Rev. J. C. Davenport (commonly known as "The Bishop" of Skeffington) above referred to, and brother of Mr. H. S. Davenport, the well-known sporting correspondent. He was educated at Uppingham, and Hertford College, Oxford; "a chip of the old block," he was always very fond of sport; hunting, shooting, fishing, and racing were all uppermost in his mind. Of his connection with the latter pursuit the Rector recalls, with somewhat mixed feelings of pleasure and regret, a visit to Newmarket Heath, his favourite course, in the company of some Oxford pals, when he witnessed "Pretender" beat "Belladrum" for the Two Thousand Guineas. In his youthful days his great friend, Horace Flower, resided at Skeffington Vale,

THE REV. J. R. DAVENPORT.

John Burton & Son, Photographers.

and having had the misfortune to break his leg he gave Mr. Davenport "carte blanche" of his stable, the following being one of many fine runs in which the subject of this notice participated, mounted upon a dun horse, which turned at nothing, belonging to the above gentleman. Dick Summers viewed the fox away from Alexton Wood; the gallop was by Finchley Bride, Loddington Village, Launde Park Wood, between Leigh Lodge and Cole's Lodge, through Prior's Coppice nearly to Braunston, then bearing to the right reynard pointed for Ridlington, but hugging the Hog's-back they ran into him just short of Launde Park Wood. The Rector admits he skirted a good bit in this run, but had the pleasure of taking the fox from the hounds, no one else being present, and of presenting it to the huntsman when he arrived on the scene. He describes it as "a very brilliant gallop; hounds worked right well, and at times ran very fast, racing away from the field before catching their dead-beaten quarry on the Hog's-back." The mask of this fine old dog-fox hangs in the hall at Skeffington Rectory. The following frank description of a night spent in the worship of Bacchus, which the Rector has kindly forwarded to me, must be given in his own words, otherwise it might be thought that I was pulling the long bow!

> 'Timber' Powell, as he was called from his partiality in the field, resided at the Whitehall, Billesdon, and many were the good woodcock that 'just flew through the kitchen' before being devoured. On one occasion 'Timber' asked my father and self to eat woodcock and sample port wine, of which my father was a great connoisseur, and twelve black bottles were placed on the table after the woodcock had been despatched. Now 'Timber' said, 'We'll take one each in rotation.' Our host, my father and myself each sipped, smelled, and held up our glasses in front of a well-lit lamp, and came to the conclusion that the wine was very good. There were no fighting cocks to-night, and after a smoke and a good strong glass of whiskey toddy (the night was very cold), lighting up another excellent weed, we set out to walk home—one mile. We had not gone far before the old man took my arm and remarked,—

'Tell you what Jack, Timber's liquor has got hold of me.' I replied—'has it, by George,' upon which the governor said, 'Well, never mind, its one o'clock in the morning, no one will see US'—to which I made no reply, but thought it a bit rough that my father should speak in the PLURAL number!

Rev. J. HOUSON, Rector of Brant Broughton in the Sixties, was a typical Sporting Parson, of whom Mrs. Leslie, of Alton, Hants. (sister of Mr. Davenport) writes:—

He had four daughters: the eldest, Anna, married Dick Sutton; the second became Mrs. Burnside, of Benham, where I stayed with them occasionally; the third, Isabella, married Colonel Warrand, and Lucy, the youngest, who was a great pet of her father's. She was petite, and he was proud of her riding, and used to call her "Jockey." On one occasion he made her read the lessons for him in Broughton Church.

Of the Rev. BANKS WRIGHT I have much clearer recollections. He, too, was a hunting parson, and there is an excellent likeness of him in Sir Francis Grant's picture of the Quorn Meet at Gartree Hill in 1858—on the left of the four Sutton brothers. He was a queer-looking man I used to think, and certainly queer-tempered; he had a very nice wife, commonly called "Aunt Sophy"; she was a Heathcote (Lord Aveland's family). He was always grumbling and pleading poverty, but had, I believe, an allowance from the Sutton Estate. They lived at Shelton Hall, near Newark, and there I once stayed with them somewhere about 1864–65. They had two sons: Vere, who fought under Garibaldi; and Henry, who was in the 15th Hussars. There was a fine view of Belvoir from the windows of Shelton Hall.

Mr. Banks Wright was a god-son of Sir Joseph Banks, the Naturalist, whose portrait was in the morning-room at Skeffington, after whom he was Christian-named, and afterwards turned it into a double name.

The Rev. Arthur Sutton is now Rector of Brant Broughton.

The Rev. Hugh Palliser Costobadie.

The Rev. Hugh Palliser Costobadie, a connection of "Parson Dove," was born at Wensley Rectory, in the county of York, in 1804; his name appears in the register of Harrow School, 1813-15, and he proceeded to St. John's Coll., Cambridge, in 1822, where, although not co-temporary, he made the acquaintance of an old Harrovian, in the person of Lord Palmerston, who sat as a burgess for Cambridge University, 1811-30, through whom, at a later date, he became acquainted with another distinguished Harrovian, viz., Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister, during the latter's brief Administration 1834-35, or in 1841. Mr. Costobadie, although of a very unassuming disposition, used jokingly to say, "its not everyone who has had the honour to walk arm in arm between a Prime Minister 'in esse' and a Prime Minister 'in futuro.'" The effigies of the great Statesmen and "old boys" now stand on either side as one walks into the Vaughan Library at Harrow, where the writer has often stood between the carved marble, even as his father stood between them "in the flesh." Mr. Costobadie was co-temporary with the father of Charlotte Bronté.

Mr. Costobadie held the living of Hallaton from 1838-43, the personal recollections of him by Mr. Tailby and the Rev. F. Thorp extending from this time—when they had but just commenced their "varsity career,"—down to his death in 1887, a period of half-a-century.

The proximity of Wensley to the famous training establishment of Middleham had a good deal to do with that appreciation of horses which he imbibed at an early age, for to that celebrated moor he would frequently resort at break o'day. At Cambridge he found a similar attraction in the neighbouring Newmarket Heath, from which it may be inferred that any lack of interest displayed in the study of mathematics or the classics, was amply made up for by an ardent pursuit of equestrian knowledge; in fact, had the latter been a "test subject" upon leaving, he might as easily have taken "honours" as his B.A. degree! At that time undergraduates, who could afford to do so, were allowed to

keep their own horses, and the stone steps from which they mounted still remain in the college courtyard.

These were the days of the "Town and Gown" rows, in which Mr. Costobadie's height—about 6 feet 4 inches—and immense strength, made him a formidable antagonist. A co-temporary of his used to say that with two good sticks "Costo," by which abbreviation he was known, and another "son of Anak," named Wyld, could defend or clear a street. The latter was such an adept with his fists that a wag once wrote upon a card "A thrashing machine to let," and stuck it on the door of Wyld's rooms.

The circumstance that two of Mr. Costobadie's sisters had married and settled in the Midlands, no doubt determined him to locate himself amidst the wide pastures of Leicestershire. At Hallaton he kept about half-a-dozen brood mares, always aiming at producing something with blood and yet bone enough to carry his weight, and succeeded in breeding several colts that could go the pace, jump, and stay. He used, however, to say that so fascinating is the pursuit, that the surest way to ruin a man fond of horses is to make him a present of a brood mare! Amongst the many traditions relating to his Hallaton days is one that, upon a certain Sunday, he took four services, rode forty miles, jumping four gates rather than open them, shot a couple of wild ducks and brought them home fastened to his saddle.

Mr. Tailby recently acquainted the writer with one of his early recollections. Mr. Costobadie was driving tandem between Hallaton and Bowden, but instead of keeping to the main road, attempted the bridle path. However, upon arrival at the bridge over the brook he found it too narrow by a few inches to admit of the dog-cart passing over; determined not to turn back, he out with the horses and off with one wheel, which just allowed the axle a clear passage. Squire Osbaldeston used to be styled the "Moonlight Hunter," equally appropriately might the object of this

memoir be termed the "Moonlight Parson," for by aid of the "parish lantern" he would often ride from Kibworth Hall, Leicestershire, to Edith Weston Hall in Rutland, about twenty miles as the crow flies, without making further use of the roads than to cross them.

In the middle of last century many church livings could be as freely bought, sold, or exchanged as a horse, and between them, Mr. Costobadie and his brother, the Rev. Henry, acquired the next presentation of Hallaton and the Advowson of Husbands Bosworth. Upon the glebe belonging to the latter stands the famous covert, Bosworth Gorse. The interest in both livings were, however, disposed of at a later date, but prior thereto, in a letter dated 10th October, 1844, superscribed "My Dear Hugh," Mr. Henry Greene offered his "poor little living" of King's Norton to his old friend and hunting companion, Mr. Costobadie, which he accepted and held for 43 years, but did not actually reside there until 1857. After hunting regularly with Mr. Greene and Sir Richard Sutton until 1850 (during which he acted as co-trustee with the latter for the Quenby Estate), he was appointed British Chaplain at Coblentz, where, at the Schloss, Prince William of Prussia, afterwards King, and Emperor of Germany, with his consort, *nee* the Princess of Saxe-Weimar—better known as the Empress Augusta,—then resided the greater part of the year. The latter frequently attended service at the English Chapel, both the Prince and his Royal spouse showing many tokens of their personal regard for the British Chaplain during the six years he remained there. After a year spent in the Isle of Man, where he enjoyed some good fishing and shooting, the Vicar took up his residence at Norton in 1857; but increasing responsibilities towards his family, coupled with the loss of the greater part of his private means, effectually prevented his resumption of hunting. Nevertheless, he was seldom without something that could go, a bit of blood for preference, which his judgment enabled him to pick up for little money; and when funds permitted he would purchase a long-tailed colt,

which, under his direction, Underwood, the breaker of Billesdon, would handle. About 1869 a welcome windfall, in the shape of a substantial legacy, enabled the Vicar to disburse a goodly number of bank notes of different values amongst his tradesmen in Leicester.—In those days "Cash Stores" had not come into vogue; a pleasant relationship existed between the shopkeeper and his customer, who could always depend upon his requirements receiving personal attention, and he himself civility and respect.—A handful of the new, and therefore clean, Bank of England notes were, for convenience, deposited by the Vicar in his silk hat! and as his reverence made his way from shop to shop it happened that, unmindful of its precious contents, in taking it off to salute a friend, a shower of notes fluttered to the ground; but the amusement of passers-by was as nothing compared to what, had they been present, would have been the astonishment of anyone acquainted with the usually impecunious state of the Vicar's exchequer! !

The notes restored without loss—this time to the Vicar's pocket—the Vicar soon became an interested spectator at the sale of horses held by that genial expert "Bob" Warner, in the Bell Hotel yard. After a preliminary inspection, selection, and "trot up and down," the hammer would fall to the nod of the Vicar, who from this source, coupled with the not wholly disinterested assistance of Catlin the dealer, soon succeeded in installing a nag wherever a stable could be requisitioned in the village; the extremely meagre stable accommodation at the Vicarage (even though the coal-house was stripped of its contents to make way for a pony) being totally inadequate to cope with the increase in the "stud." It was then we boys had the time of our lives!

Having ridden and shot in the neighbourhood for so many years, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the Vicar knew every field and hedge for miles around, and pretty nearly on which side to look for the ditch; the most likely side for a fox to break cover and the point

he probably would try to make. Amongst other things connected with the stable for which he entertained a preference was the use of the dandy-brush to a horse's legs rather than washing them down, which, even though covered by four white "Stockings," he considered an "idle trick," from which cracked heels might result. He would stand by whilst his horse was shod and see that it was done as he directed, rather than as the farrier recommended! Would never give a horse chaff, especially the bought variety; but on coming in, a bit of good hay to prevent catching cold, with a little liquid strained off the linseed; and later the feed of corn with linseed, and a few old beans in place of chaff, to prevent bolting.

One of his axioms was, that in cold weather, a good quick grooming and extra rug were as good as an additional feed of corn. Although he never bought a horse without looking in its mouth, curiously enough he once bought a *mule* without doing so, to find later on that its tongue was almost severed!

Mr. Costobadie was of a very genial temperament, and shared with his old friend "the Bishop" of Skeffington, the reputation of being one of the best judges of wine in the county. By his long residence in a great wine-producing country, his palate—which, being a non-smoker, was very acute—had become accustomed to and appreciated the pure juice of the grape—the good Rhine wine—and although a lover of port, he was of opinion that the English taste had been ruined by excessive fortification until people could hardly discriminate between a good natural vintage and anything else labelled *Oporto*. Of the many good stories he could tell of his Cambridge and other days, the writer can remember the following, which he thinks should be worth recording:—

Of a rather insignificant and not over popular "Don,"

who purchased a small bit of ground which he had enclosed and turned into a garden, a wag thus wrote :—

Professor Smith a little garden made,
And round it placed a little palisade;
If the Professor's mind you wish to know,
This little palisade doth plainly show!

Upon attending, with a friend, the service at a village church not far from Cambridge, the preacher, whose name was Beverley, appeared somewhat abstracted in manner and to their surprise gave out his text as being from the Second of Jude! When calling afterwards at the inn, Mr. Costobadie's companion cut the following upon the window pane with his diamond ring :—

Fie! Beverley, fie! with your clerical eye;
Be not so forward and rude:
When propounding your text, do not belie,
And forget not the SECOND of Jude.*

When Addison was at School he and his school-fellows were asked to write a Prize Essay upon the first Miracle.—Most of the boys wrote pages; the poet merely seven words :—"The water saw its Lord and blushed," needless to add, this beautiful conception carried of the prize.

Mr. Costobadie used to tell a story on the same subject :—

A Parson accompanied by his daughter called at a neighbouring Vicarage. The Vicar was not in, but the visitors were shown into the dining room, where his luncheon awaited him. Being upon very intimate terms of friendship the Parson took the liberty to help his daughter to a glass of sherry, and whilst waiting, polished off the rest of the contents of the decanter. Unable to

* The man who has not taken a prize for scriptural knowledge may require to be reminded that there is only ONE chapter in Jude.

wait longer, he filled up the empty decanter with water, and scribbled a note of explanation as follows :—

"Our Lord, when on earth, turned water into wine ; but I and my daughter have turned wine into water."

A Sporting Vicar, upon being taken to task by his Bishop for his practice of driving tandem, which his Lordship did not think becoming, the Vicar protested that he could not see anything more reprehensible in his driving tandem, than in his Lordship driving a carriage and pair. Whereupon, the Bishop made this sage rejoinder: "That many things, which in themselves are neither wrong nor wicked, may, nevertheless, not be expedient." And to illustrate his meaning, placed his hands together immediately in front of his face, and said :—"When we pray we adopt this attitude—our hands side by side like my horses abreast, but"—withdrawing his right hand and placing it in front of the other with fingers of both outstretched from his nose :—"What would be thought if we changed the position thus ?"

When visiting his native dale for the grouse shooting, the Vicar of Aysgarth requested Mr. Costobadie to preach for him one Sunday. Ever ready to assist a brother cleric, he replied,—"With pleasure, but you must not expect "much, for you know, every jockey rides best in his own "saddle, and I always preach best in my own pulpit."

Occasionally a favourite spaniel, feeling either lonely or devout would follow the Vicar into the Church at Norton, and when observed, the Vicar would lean over from the old "three-decker" to the Clerk and say, quite audibly in the middle of the service, "John! Just take the dog out!" Sometimes the request would be varied thus: —"John! Just open—or shut—those windows; its suffocating, or draughty," as the case might be !

The late Sir Arthur Grey Hazlerigg used for many years to shoot with Mr. Frank Palmer, who rented the

moors around Loch Leitter, Inverness, from Lord Seafield —now and for years past rented by the Bradley Martins of Balmaccan, where a very similar incident occurred.

The celebrated Father Ignatius was one day preaching there at the Episcopalian Church, Kilmartin, when a sheep-dog ensconced itself among the congregation. This being no uncommon thing in the Highlands, had it kept quiet probably it would have been allowed to remain till the end of the service; but, doubtless aroused by the eloquence of the preacher, the dog disturbed those present, including the Rev. Father himself, who at last exclaimed—whilst vigourously declaiming—"And the Lord said unto Moses—that dog must be put out"!

Magee, Lord Bishop of Peterborough, and for a brief space Archbishop of York, Mr. Costobadie held in the highest estimation, and of him used to relate the following good story. His lordship was paying a visit to a Rural Dean who was a staunch teetotaller, and at luncheon, many of the clergy being present, only water was to be seen on the table, but aware that his lordship was partial to a glass of port the host leaned over towards his right reverend guest, and in a low voice said, "If your lordship would prefer a glass of wine you will find it in your bedroom," at which remark the Bishop pleasantly smiled.

A short time thereafter the Bishop invited a number of the clergy—the Rural Dean included—to the Palace, and at lunchean took care to have the Rural Dean at his elbow. When the port and sherry was passed round the Bishop whispered to the Rural Dean, "If your reverence would like a little water you will find it in your bedroom!"

Upon another occasion a hospitable Rural Dean was presiding at luncheon when about sixty of the clergy were present. For some reason or other the host asked for the loan of a Prayer Book, but sad to relate not one of the sixty clerics happened to have one; soon afterwards, however, to create a diversion the Rural Dean asked for a corkscrew,

whereupon sixty different specimens were instantly produced!

In disposition Mr. Costobadie was very like the benevolent vicar who, when a man asked for a day's work, although there was nothing that really required doing, being anxious to assist the man, he was told to wheel a heap of stones from one corner of the garden to the other; in a few hours the man notified the vicar that he had accomplished his task, and wished to know what he could do next? To this puzzler the vicar replied that he really did not know, but thought he had better wheel the stones back again!" Without going to such extremes the Vicar of Norton was equally reluctant to give a disappointing reply to such applicants for employment, and after searching round the premises to find some sort of a job, would often end by saying, oh! yes, I know what yon can do, you can help me cut up some fire-wood (a favourite past-time of the vicar's), when the hired helper would be told to stand by whilst the vicar gave him a very practical demonstration of the way in which it should be done! No man, be he guest or tramp, was ever allowed to go away hungry or thirsty from the vicarage. In the former case the ceremonius enquiry "Will you take anything" was never made, but the decanters, or more often the bottles, were first produced, the only questisn asked being, "Which do you prefer, port or sherry?"

Although a parson himself, and of clerical stock, Mr. Costobadie used jokingly to say, "Never trust parsons, lawyers, or doctors!"

Descended from an old Yorkshire family of French origin Mr. Costobadie resumed in 1882 the prefix "De" to his patronymic, which had been abandoned by his forbears, when they became anglicised in 1685. Accustomed in early life especially to mix with the great, he was equally at home with Peer or Peasant, in Cottage or Palace. An aged lady, and one very competent to express

an opinion, once said, "Mr. Costobadie is the most courteous and gallant gentleman I have ever known."

This memoir has already extended far beyond the writer's first intention, and in the space at his disposal he will not attempt even to briefly outline a life and personality to which a whole volume could not do justice; neither is this the place to indulge in any sentiment born of filial regard, reverence and devotion, suffice it to say that the Vicar, besides being a lover of horses, was also a great lover of humanity, for whose weakness and frailty he ever made the greatest allowance. I may however, mention at haphazard a few incidents, trivial in themselves, but affording some indication of his character. When Curate at Ilston he once saw an old woman trying to wheel a barrow full of coals: he saved her the trouble. When a brace of partridge came to table, he carved one, put the other between two soup plates, and before sitting down himself took it up to an old parishioner. In calling upon any poor person he always thought it more important to take them a flask of port than a bundle of tracts!

Thoroughly orthodox, he never mentioned religion out of Church, except by request. When the police arrested a man and he was convicted for doing injury to his property, he drove into Leicester next day, called on the Governor of the Prison, and paid the man's fine that he might be set at liberty. The two last acts of his life were to send help to a poor parishioner at Stretton, and when told the hounds were passing through the village, he got up and said "Let me see the beauties once more." Without any ostentatious display of religion he was kind, friendly, hospitable and charitable in the strict sense of the word, for he thought no evil, neither did he speak any of his fellow creatures.

The old Vicar passed away in his 83rd year, on March 28th, 1887, and was laid to rest where he had ministered so long.

HARBRC
Parson Dove.

The Rev. Cave Humfrey, Rector, until his death in 1874, of Laughton, Leicestershire, will be remembered by many who are "getting on," and a still greater number will be acquainted with the description given of him as the prototype of "Parson Dove," in Whyte Melville's entertaining novel "Market Harborough."

The quaint sketch of Parson Dove annexed, portrays him as clean shaven; similarly he is represented in the purely fanciful description contained in the novel, which, however, differs considerably from the writer's recollection of him in the seventies, when he possessed a particularly luxuriant growth of snow-white hair and side whiskers, giving him quite a venerable appearance.* Moreover, this impression is corroborated by a photograph taken by his niece, Miss Constance Humfrey, a daughter of the Parson's eldest brother, Charles Humfrey, the eminent Q.C. of the Midland Circuit. This lady, as "Cissy Dove," was one of the leading personages in the novel. The hero, John Standish Sawyer, was a purely imaginary character, so, needless to add, "Cissy" did not become Mrs. Sawyer, but married a Captain Wilson. However, all who knew her either in real life as Mrs. Wilson, or as "Cissy Dove," will regret to know that she passed away as this memoir was in course of publication.

In a footnote to the following article dated five years ago, the writer stated that he had been informed that Mrs. Wilson was no longer in the "land of the living"; but in the following February, wrote:—

> I made this statement on the authority of one of the oldest residents in Leicestershire, who knew all the Humfrey family intimately. I was, however, delighted to receive a letter from the lady herself to-day, telling me that she is still *ici bas*, and hale and hearty. The intelligence will, I am sure, be most gratifying to all who, like myself, had the pleasure of her acquaintance, and I can only express my regret that I was misinformed. I trust she will forgive me. She also tells me

* As, however, the novel was published in 1861, there was ample time for such a change as would coincide with my recollecton.—F. P. de C.

that she recently sustained the irreparable loss, by fire, of a copy of "Market Harborough," presented to her by the late Major Whyte Melville.

Mr. Tailby remarked recently to the writer that of all the hunting parsons he ever knew, he considered Cave Humfrey the best across Leicestershire, and recalled the fact that he rode in "jack" not top-boots.

The Rev. Cave Humfrey was particularly distinguished for his benevolent appearance, and, moreover, possessed that indefinable, inimitable, and yet unmistakable air of good breeding, which, being quite devoid of assumption, denotes the man and the gentleman. His was a very noticeable figure at the covert side, especially when mounted on a favourite white horse, of Arab descent.

In an article by Sir Willoughby Maycock, which appeared in "Baily's Magazine," of December, 1908, Sir Willoughby quotes Whyte Melville's description of the reverend gentleman.

> As Mr. Sawyer ran his eye over the person and appointments of his future host, he could not but acknowledge to himself that never —no, never—in his life had he seen such a thoroughly workmanlike exterior; from the clean-shaven, ruddy face, with its bright blue eye and close-cropped grey hair, down to the long, heavy hunting spurs, the man was faultless all over. Nobody's leathers were so well made, so well cleaned, so well put on as Parson Dove's; and, though he affected brown tops, it is well known that they were such unequalled specimens as to have caused one of his intimate friends, who particularly piqued himself on 'boots,' to give up all hope even of imitation, and relapse into 'napoleons' in disgust. Why, the very way he folded his neckcloth was suggestive of Newmarket, and no scarlet coat ever turned out by Poole looked so like hunting as that well-cut, unassuming black. His open-flapped saddle, his shining stirrup-irons, his heavy double bridle, were all in keeping with the man himself. And it is needless to state that he was riding a thoroughbred bay, with a pair of fired forelegs and about the best shoulders you ever saw on a hunter.

And goes on to say—

> So much for the skit, now for the reality.

Parson Dove invariably, like many of the old school, donned a shiny black claw-hammer evening coat, and a low-cut embroidered evening waistcoat. No better criterion of his hardihood can be afforded than by the fact that his chest had no other covering than a thin, pleated shirt, surmounted by high stick-up collars. He wore no tie at all where ties are usually worn, but in lieu thereof one white fold, running parallel with the waistcoat, crossed over and secured by two turquoise pins connected by a chain just above the top button of the aforesaid waistcoat. I certainly have never seen anything like it at Newmarket. For the 'well-cleaned leathers' we must substitute pepper-and salt trousers, surmounted by a pair of high napoleons; and there you have the *tout ensemble* of the genuine Parson Dove.

Parson Dove—and I am inclined to think he enjoyed that patronymic prior to the publication of the novel, though on this point I am open to correction—was, in fact, incumbent of two parishes, viz., Laughton and Foxton, about six and three miles respectively from Market Harborough. He always came out hunting with his niece, and a very lovely girl she was. From the fact that she always wore a fawn-coloured habit, her reverend uncle came to be called 'Parson Dove,' and she 'Miss Dove.'

They lived at Laughton, he visiting Foxton only when someone required spiritual consolation or interment, and he held one service in the church there on Sundays. My people lived in the village, and Parson Dove 'readied' me for Confirmation. I well remember the day when a whole vanload of us started off, all anointed with an extra dose of pomatum, to meet the Bishop of Peterborough at Kibworth. Foxton Church was in rather a ramshackle condition in those days, but the Dissenters had erected a magnificent chapel for themselves. I think it was poor 'Kit' Pemberton—one of the cheeriest souls that ever hunted in the 'shires'; he threw away his life in the Franco-Prussian War—who was riding home from hunting with Parson Dove, and as they passed the chapel he remarked, pointing to it with his whip, 'I call that a monument to foxhunting!" 'What do you mean?' enquired the Vicar. 'I mean," said Pemberton, 'that when the parson hunts four days a week, they're pretty sure to build a Dissenting chapel.' This story formed the basis of a good deal of friendly *badinage* at the covert side for some time afterwards at the Vicar's expense.

I am told it was a not uncommon practice many years ago in foxhunting centres for clergymen to give out in church the meets of hounds for the current week, and I am assured, on authority which I believe to be absolutely reliable, that Cave Humphrey was the last of the clergy to adopt this practice. I cannot, however, speak from my own knowledge as to this, as I never heard him do so, though I have sat under his ministration at Foxton many a time and oft.

The late Mr. H. O. Nethercote, in his 'History of the Pytchley Hunt," says: 'For many a long year there was no more familiar figure seen at certain of the Quorn and Pytchley meets than that of the Rev. William Cave Humphrey, of Laughton. The long, straight back, the 'once round' white linen scarf still dwell on the memory of many a Pytchley man, as does the form of the fair niece, who was said to be the heroine of Whyte-Melville's immortal 'Market Harborough.'* For some time it seemed, in the eyes of niece as well as uncle, that there was nothing more enjoyable in this world than the hunting-field. 'It is a very solemn thing being married,' said a parent to his daughter, on her announcing her acceptance of a suitor. 'Yes, father, I know it,' said the 'fiancée, but it is a deal solemner thing being single!' So thought, too, the fair huntress of Laughton. Runs with the hounds, however long, all of a sudden seemed to her nothing worth, compared with a life-long run with a husband, and the worthy old Rector was left alone in his glory. He, to whom a day with the hounds had seemed for many a year to be the one great enjoyment of life, was now no longer seen with Pytchley or with Quorn; and after a while a strange name appeared in the Clergy List as Rector of the Parish of Laughton."

In 'Baily' of March, 1906, I was much interested in reading 'Recollections of Seventy-five Years' Sport,' by the veteran Robert Fellowes, an old and valued friend of my late father. Alluding to Gumley, where the happiest days of my youth were spent, he writes: 'In the next parish lived one of Whyte-Melville's heroes, Parson Dove. Jogging home after hunting one evening, I asked him how he filled up his spare time in the summer. He said he gardened a good deal. Enquiry elicited

* There cannot be a doubt as to this, because I am informed by her brother, the Rev. Cave Humfrey, that when Whyte Melville presented Mrs. Wilson with a copy of his novel, he at the same time wrote her a charming letter of apology for the liberty he had taken in thus introducing her into its pages.—F. P. DE C.

that there was but one flower he cared for, and that was a cauliflower.'

Poor old Humfrey was called to his rest on November 4th, 1874. In 'Our Van' of December of that year he was thus alluded to: 'A great character, well-known in Leicestershire, the Rev. Cave Humfrey, of Laughton, near Market Harborough, has recently passed away. He was the original of Parson Dove in Mr. Whyte-Melville's famous novel, 'Market Harborough'—a thorough gentleman and sportsman, one of a class of whom there are but, unhappily, only a few left.'

A then weekly correspondent of the 'Field' wrote as follows: 'Before I resume my notes of last week's sport, let me pay a brief tribute to the memory of one of the oldest members of the Hunt, suddenly called from among us. Few thought that on reaching Rolleston on the 4th instant they would be told that the Rev. Cave Humphrey was dead. He was out with us at the opening meet at Gumley, and though, like many of us, complaining of increasing years, he still seemed as cheery and fond of the sport as ever. A friend kindly gives me the following description, which, to many of your readers, will recall old memories of bygone days. Cave Humphrey was born, lived and died at Laughton Rectory. Living to the ripe age of 73, and having hunted in the neighbourhood of Market Harborough all his life, few men were so well known as he, and his hunting recollections would fill a volume. He could take you back to the day when the Quorn found at Marston Hills, and killed at Tilton Wood, and there were only about a dozen fences in the whole line, but they being parish boundaries, with big, old, boggy ditches, proved serious obstacles; to another day from Gumley Wood to Loddington Redditch, before the Keythorpe and Nosely spinneys were planted; and back to the time when Naseby battlefield was almost a morass. His anecdotes of the masters of the Quorn and Pytchley were very amusing, but his love always returned to old Sir Richard (Sutton), whose exploits he was never weary of relating. In his younger days he always had two or three good horses, and was bad to beat, though of late years, from an injury to his knee, he was obliged to content himself with a galloping hack; and many ladies and youngsters availed themselves of his knowledge of the country to show them safely through a good run. For more than thirty years he never allowed a 'vet.' to enter his stable, and a dose of physic was never allowed. It

was a long time before he took to clipping his horses; they were turned up in a large, old stable, divided by rails, and the windows knocked out; but influenza and mud fever were unknown horrors to him. Long may the day be absent when the clergy are driven from the field. He never neglected his duties, but enlarged his field of usefulness by meeting his friends and parishioners in their everyday life, and many an angry word has been left unsaid when his black coat and faultless choker have appeared in sight.'

I can make no claim to artistic talent, but some thirty years ago, or more, I made a sketch of 'Parson Dove,' which I took to Reynolds, in St. James's Street, who sold it almost immediately to some member of the Quorn Hunt, who pronounced it to be the living image of Parson Dove.*

The Rev. Cave Humfrey was thrice married, his first wife being his cousin, daughter of William Haymes of Kibworth, Esquire; his second wife was also a cousin, Miss Cave; and his third wife was a Miss Staines.

The fine old sportsman passed away quite suddenly, being, apparently, quite well in the evening, having ordered his horse to be ready for hunting the following morning, but was taken with a seizure about midnight, and died at 4 a.m.

* The copy of it here reproduced by kind permission of Sir Willoughby Maycock, K.C.M.G., may serve to bring the Parson to the minds of those who remember him, and give the younger generation some idea, when they read "Market Harborough," of what "Parson Dove" was like in real life.

The article quoted above elicited the following response in the February number of "Baily's Magazine," and as it is from the pen of Parson Dove's nephew and namesake, the Rev. Cave Humfrey, should prove interesting:—

I have read with much interest Mr. W. Maycock's recent article in "Baily' on Parson Dove; on one or two points, in justice to my uncle's memory, I should like to comment, with your kind permission.

First, let me offer my compliments and thanks to the writer for his very clever sketch of the rector.

There is no doubt about the original of Parson Dove, as I have it from one to whom Whyte Melville stated it. My uncle always disliked the idea, and I once heard him at dinner say, 'I believe that some good people with more imagination than taste permit themselves to say so.' His costume was studied, and in effect unique, the display of fine cambric shirt front and collar united, the massive white scarf, always fresh-looking, was really a fine expression of dandyism, and people used to turn and look at it in London.

My memory, however, while perfectly reminiscent of the curiously low waistcoat, fails me at the 'embroidery' mentioned. With regard to the alleged ramshackle condition of Foxton Church, I should say very decidedly that it and Laughton Church were neither better nor worse than the neighbouring churches of that day. Then, too, a restored church was a mark of a High Churchman, which the rector would have certainly repudiated being. I venture to think there must be some mistake about the story of the Dissenting chapel at Foxton being 'a monument to fox-hunting,' only natural after the lapse of so many years.

First, it should be remembered that such buildings were springing up all over the country; next, I have it from one who, knowing both well, says that Pemberton, so kindly and genial, was the last man to say such a thing, and the rector the last man to whom it would be said, the kindliest deference being always displayed to him by all. Then, as to the alleged dictum that 'Where the parson hunts four days a week they are pretty sure to build a Dissenting chapel,' with its implied inference of neglected duties, let me mention a case in my own experience, where a squire built a grand new chapel, not because the parson hunted four days a week, but because he worked so hard in the parish as to fill the church and empty the old meeting-house. Again, a story literally *a propos de bottes*, told about myself by my friend, Mr. J. L. Randall, in his 'History of the Meynell Hunt,' quite contradicts such inference.

I feel sure from personal knowledge that the rector did not give notice in church of the meets of the hounds; possibly the tradition may have come down from his father, who was Squire and Rector of Laughton, and there kept a pack of

beagles. In connection with this a story with a good old-fashioned flavour was told me many years ago by a very old gentleman who, as a young man, was staying in the house when it happened. There had been a merry hunt, and several of the field came back to dinner at 2 or 3 o'clock. The port wine was good and plentiful—everyone, no doubt, had enough. Then came the carefully prepared and daintily served tea, the punctilious ritual of which survived into my younger days, when dinner had receded to a later hour. Afterwards round came the horses; next the hat-hunting and chaff and cheery good-nights—'See you at Gumley to-morrow,' &c. Out in the quiet, dark, frosty night, each mounted in turn at the hall door and jogged homeward, with full trust in the homing instinct of his mount, and so probably to sleep. And what an awakening! Each had mounted someone else's horse, and so arrived about midnight at someone else's house.

Imagination loves to linger on the scene—grooms decline to have their 'osses messed about all night, riders decline a walk of some miles, and the ladies have to appear, mindful, no doubt, of the Frenchman's genial philosophy, 'If we have not those we love, let us love those we have.' Forbid it. If the one they would have is absent, at least they can give their views to the one who is present.

Then the emotionalism in the pulpit was merely the result of a nervous affection, and had no more to do with sentiment than a sneeze has. In social life this affection was often to be observed, as in certain other members of the family; so the story of the sermon annotated 'cry here' is, as the children say, only a story. I have good reason for saying this, for just about the time I was ordained, mindful, perhaps, of his own early struggles and wishing to lighten mine, he one morning in his study gave me a great pile of sermons, adding 'I know them all by heart.' Though I was not able to repeat his boast, I saw enough of them to detect no trace of the studied tears. No doubt Mr. Fellowes and he were joking about the cauliflower—the roses and lilies of the valley at Laughton are what my memory chiefly recalls.

One story he told me always had a special interest for me. Knowing the country so well, he was often asked to look after distinguished strangers and show them about. Probably, on such an occasion, Louis Napoleon, when living in England, of course before he became Emperor, jumped right on the top of

him ; my uncle, in telling me of it, simply said, 'Of course I spoke to him about it.' Now I, experienced in his gift of saying bitter things in a smooth way, always felt rather sorry for Napoleon at being the recipient of a short but powerful discourse on 'My duty towards my neighbour'—at a fence. As a man of old and gentle descent, he had the fine manner of a day that is past, habits cultured and refined in advance of his day, and a taste even fastidious.

If the original of Parson Dove is to live in posterity, it is only fair he should be known as he really was.

In conclusion, I have the Rev. Cave Humfrey's kind permission to quote further interesting particulars respecting his uncle, from his recent correspondence with me on the subject :—

I used often to stay with John Humfrey and your aunt at Kibworth Hall, when I was a boy. I never knew their son,* but I believe it was some likeness in me to him that was the cause of my being there a good deal. I do not remember him but I faintly recall a Capt. Costobadie, who used to be there very frequently.

My uncle came of an old Leicestershire family, and was connected with many others such as the Halfords, Vaughans, Whalleys, Vowes, Brownes of Stretton-en-le-Field, Caves of Stamford, &c. He was born in 1800 ; his father was Rector and Lord of the Manor of Laughton, his mother was Miss Cave-Brown, sister of Sir William, 9th Baronet ; his grandfather was Lebbeus Humfrey, Esq., of Kibworth, who was High Sheriff of Leicestershire about 1770.

My uncle took his degree at Cambridge, and succeeded his father as Rector of Laughton ; Foxton was subsequently given him by the Crown. He was tall and handsome, with a well-bred, distinguished appearance. Though devoted to hunting, anything horsy or sporting in his costume was conspicuous by its absence. In domestic and social life he hardly ever spoke of horses or hunting.

* Alluding to Lieut. John Charles Humfrey (only son and heir) who, to the inexpressible grief of his parents, died of fever in early manhood.

His habits, tastes and ideas were refined, and in days when dressing for dinner was not as general as now, he invariably, even when no one else was present but myself, dressed; and the collar attached to the shirt, and the white roll of scarf all beautifully got up, gave me as a boy and young man a sense of delicate cleanness and freshness never forgotten.

He was fond of picking up pictures when in London, and had some good ones.

It was old Sir John Fisher, who married a Miss Haymes, sister of my aunt, who told me the story of the men going home to the wrong houses. With regard to the Napoleon incident, the hounds met at Rugby. My uncle was piloting Louis Napoleon, who was riding a big white horse belonging, I fancy, to Lord Forester, and from the ditch into which his horse had brought him saw this white horse threatening destruction.

The method of my uncle for getting himself and my sister to distant "Meets" is worth recalling. He called the conveyance he used the "bus,"—it was like a covered waggonette cut in half, and running on two wheels, just room inside for one person on each side and a servant on the box; the roads ran through large unenclosed fields, and as the servant had to get off the box to hold open the gates which divided them, a pair of reins were brought through the front of the "bus" one on either side of the driver and separate from his reins, that the inmates could steer safely through the gateways. Then their saddle-horses had to be led, which was managed thus—these inside reins were taken out through the back of the "bus," and the hunters attached to them so that if they jerked or hung back nothing broke, but only the horse in the shafts was stopped. It looked a funny turn-out, especially with the grim hatchet-faced old Thomas on the box!

Parsons who hunt and hunted in *Scarlet*.

The Rev. SLOANE STANLEY, formerly Rector of Braunston, near Grantham, kept a Stud of about 14 horses half a century ago, and regularly hunted with the Belvoir. Upon the succession to the Dukedom of "the batchelor Duke" (the sixth) of Rutland (to whom he was related) in 1857, the Rector thought he would don Scarlet, but, upon making his appearance in the field thus habilitated, his noble kinsman, the Master expressed his disapprobation; whereupon, the Rector very considerately acquiesced and resumed the more sober black.

The Rev. E. A. MILNE, M.F.H. of Chilfrome, Dorset —the present Master of the Cattistock—however, regularly hunts in Scarlet, and as, in response to my enquiry, the Master very kindly favoured me with his views on the subject, they are of so interesting a character I cannot forbear quoting from his reply:—

> I, of course, always hunt in Scarlet, as I act as my own huntsman. I also invariably wear Pink in the evenings during the Hunting Season. I always attempt to "dress the part" whatever I do; and I am old-fashioned enough always to wear a black coat and top hat for Church still even in this very small village. My friend Sir William Parker, Bart., who hunted the Newmarket and Thurlow, always wore Pink, and I feel sure there must be others, *e.g.*—Mr. Reynolds, who hunted the Coniston, I think.
>
> I have always failed to see why a Parson should not hunt. In fact, I see every reason why he should, and I always find a hunting Parson (if good at his job) is always very much appreciated.
>
> I have had the Cattistock fourteen years now; before that the North Bucks Harriers for five years; and before that the Trinity Beagles, Cambridge, so I am a fairly "old Master."

The Rev. Henry Palliser Costobadie, M.A., Jesus College, Cambridge; born 1801, became Rector of Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire, in 1839. The glebe lands attached to this benefice extend to upwards of 600 acres, and upon them is situate the famous covert known as Bosworth Gorse. Mr. Costobadie always hunted in scarlet and rode well to hounds, and not only at the University, but in the hunting field, was acknowledged to be one of the handsomest men of his day; and to his well-favoured person was united a charm of manner and kind, generous nature, which caused him to be generally beloved. In writing to me a few days ago the present Rector of Husbands Bosworth, the Rev. Maurice Lamb, observes: "I remember some years ago a late parishioner talking to me about your uncle, and telling me a little story about him. The counsel which he gave his congregation from the pulpit was 'Never mind what I do, but do as I tell you.' He believed, and held strongly to his opinion, that if husband and wife found it impossible to live happily together they were manifestly much better apart; and used to say, 'If we parsons could untie the knot as easily as we can tie it, instead of being engaged for one day in the week we should be hard at work all seven!' I have heard it said, although I cannot remember by whom, that the Rector was in the habit of giving out the hunting appointments, with other parochial notices, in the church; and that he would order the bell-ringers to herald the hounds with a peal when they met in the village; but although such instances have been known, without further authority I cannot vouch as to this."

The Rector died abroad in 1856, leaving two sons and two daughters: Clermont Hugh, Captain 3rd Dragoon Guards who died unmarried; Henry Holmes, Colonel R.H.A., of The Hermitage, Stamford, who married his cousin Gertrude, daughter of George Vere Lucas-Braithwaite, Esq., of Edith Weston Hall, Rutland: Caroline, who married

The Rev. Henry Palliser Costobadie.

Lieut.-Colonel Robert Neilson Thomas (whose mother was a grand-daughter of Lord Lisburgh); and Charlotte, who married James Bowdoin, of Boston, U.S.A.

ALTHOUGH the writer has no desire to enter at length into the oft-debated question whether clergymen should participate in the pleasures of the chase, he sees no reason to adopt an apologetic attitude on behalf of the sporting cleric, or to regard his appearance in the hunting field as necessitating exceptional vindication from any standpoint whatever. Nevertheless, it will not do to allow the conclusions of those, doubtless well meaning, but misguided folk, who attempt to draw a distinction between the parson and the rest of the field, to go unchallenged.

Most of my readers are doubtless conversant with these usual grounds of objection, which may be classed under three heads. First: that it is not right for one holding the office of a Minister of the Gospel to indulge in such pursuits! Secondly: that it is positively cruel and barbarous to hunt the fox, and therefore the parson, by his presence, is not only countenancing evil, but thereby setting a bad example to others! Finally, through following the hounds, he is said to neglect his parishioners!

Far more able pens have "time out of count" demolished all such contentions, which usually emanate from persons profoundly ignorant of the fundamental factor which governs the whole situation, viz., that fox-hunting, paradoxical though it may appear, far from being inimical to the fox, is the only means by which his species is saved from extinction, for all are agreed that were fox-hunting to be abandoned, the fox would be treated as vermin and speedily exterminated! From such a fate, all lovers of animals, and even those who do not altogether approve of hunting, would no doubt voice their sentiments with the

sporting parson, who would sincerely and piously exclaim "God forbid."

Without wishing to commit sporting parsons, or presuming to represent their views or philosophy as identical with my own, yet, having had the opportunity of discussing the subject with many clerics, I venture, with due regard to this important reservation, to give what I believe approximately to be

Their Philosophy of the Chase.

Whilst the first and third of the above propositions may be disregarded for the moment, and afterwards easily dismissed, the second, alleging cruelty, we will endeavour to further elucidate. For it may candidly be admitted that there are few amongst the most stalwart supporters of fox-hunting who, when novitiates, did not experience some doubt or qualm upon the subject. This qualified admission should, in itself, be some guarantee that fox-hunting men are neither devoid of sentiment nor lacking in sympathy, still less are they so cruel and blood-thirsty as their detractors would try to persuade themselves and others to believe.

It may be acknowledged that occasionally a man, or more often youthful beginner, does, from lack of judgment, or carried away by excitement, override his horse; but if this is accompanied by any unjustifiable use of the spur, such cruelty is very rightly regarded as reprehensible by the rest of the field. Allowing therefore that such cases deserve severe condemnation, we know there are horses so game and full of courage who, without any such urging, will go till they drop, taking as much delight in the chase as their rider; thus, so far as they are concerned, proving the truth of the old adage, "The men like it, the horses like it, the hounds like it, and who's to say the fox don't like it?" Of course accidents happen in the hunting field as elsewhere, but it must not be overlooked

that the rider and his horse take equal risks, and whether it be the man's neck or the horse's back that is broken, they are in entire sympathy and accord, one with the other. The average man will take care neither to override or otherwise abuse his faithful friend, and it must not be forgotten that

> It 'aint the 'unting as 'urts the 'orse's 'oofs,
> But the 'ammer, 'ammer, 'ammer on the 'ard 'igh road!

Now let us consider the hounds as they pursue their prey. Stiff thorns in the covert may cause no little pain and discomfort, but being bred to face them, habit becomes second nature, as we can perceive by the pleasure they take in forcing their way through. The one thing they do detest, and from which they sometimes suffer cruelly, is barbed wire, which, whether men approve or disapprove of hunting, should never be erected in a hunting country. Nails and glass upon gates and walls are also responsible for a good deal of trouble; and, incidently, when hounds are allowed to run in frosty weather, their feet get cut and sore from contact with the hard ground. But it must be generally admitted that hunting men, from their greater knowledge of animals, love of nature and out-door life, would be quite as likely as others to view with abhorrence any wanton act of cruelty to either horse or hound.

In considering the question of cruelty, we must not forget that the fox is the natural prey of the hound, and that all carnivorous animals prey upon each other. Like mortals, he is "born to sorrow, even as the sparks fly upward," for if hounds were non-existent, he could not avoid paying the "penalty of life" one way or another. But though he may have his sorrows he has his pleasures too! Imprimis, he comes into being under the most "eugenic" conditions, for his progenitors are necessarily "survivors of the fittest." Then he is left undisturbed in his native woodlands for half the year, with abundance of

good food in the shape of rabbits, rats, mice, game and poultry upon which to exercise his natural bent. Amongst other manifold advantages, he is free from the evils of a congested population, for the fox and his cubs, more fortunate than man, have ample sleeping accommodation and plenty of room to gambol about with complete freedom from their natural enemies throughout their long vacation. Consider also the pleasure he derives from his nightly marauding expeditions to stock and replenish his larder! Now take the other half of the year, when we will admit he "lives dangerously." We will presume that having survived the cubbing season, his good food and preliminary exercise have made him very fit for the effort which he will be called upon one day to make; and when that eventful day arrives, small wonder that he feels disdainfully confident in his wonderful fleetness of foot and marvellous cunning, by which he often outruns and out-manœuvres his pursuers. Note that his chances are not as they would appear, 40 to 1 against him; but that his chance of escape is so great that some 20 couples of hounds repeatedly prove no match for him.

We will not, however, try to beg the question in this way, but suppose the fox could speak for himself and his kind. Would it not follow that, like the Prince of Denmark, he would "sooner bear the ills he knows"? &c. Is it not reasonable to suppose that he would infinitely prefer to take his chance, and a good sporting chance too, in an occasional run for his life, than to be wiped off the face of the earth? For such—by gunshot, trap or poison—would be his ultimate fate, were fox-hunting to cease.

The fox, being one of the few remaining wild animals extant in the British Isles, should, in reality, not only be accounted a very valuable national asset, to be preserved at all cost, but pæans should be sung in his praise! For to him we are primarily indebted for our dashing cavalry officers and other fine specimens of manhood, who, in his wake at the earliest age, become

accustomed to the saddle, and acquire a seat not to be acquired in any other way.

Reynard is also the chief factor in improving and maintaining the breed of our horses. To him belongs the credit of attracting foreign buyers to our shores! Likewise of giving people the opportunity to meet in friendly concourse under exhilarating conditions mostly of genial and kindly intimacy.

To sum up, so far as space will allow, whilst I would indignantly repudiate any palliation of cruelty, I have endeavoured to give a fair and unprejudiced exposition of the inevitable conditions by which alone the fox is permitted to exist, from which it must be concluded that fox hunting is, so far as the laws of nature will allow, a perfectly humane, legitimate, and beneficial institution.

Having thus, I trust, satisfactorily disposed of the chief objections raised to the Parson's participation in the chase, it will surely be recognised that, without imposing any irksome restraint, his presence alone, in the hunting field, as elsewhere, must exercise a wholesome influence, and be a guarantee, if such were needed, against any undue excesses. Moreover, no reasonable being could grudge His Reverence that healthy exercise and recreation which, by giving him the chance to keep in touch with his fellows, prevents him from growing rusty, and far from causing him to neglect his parish, fits him the better to perform the duties of his calling.

THE FIND.

Yon sound's neither sheep-bell nor bark,
They're running—they're running, Go hark!
The sport may be lost by a moment's delay;
So whip up the puppies and scurry away.
Dash down through the cover by dingle and dell,
There's a gate at the bottom—I know it full well;
And they're running—they're running,
Go hark!

They're running—they're running, Go hark!
One fence and we're out of the park;
Sit down in your saddles and race at the brook,
Then smash at the bullfinch; no time for a look;
Leave cravens and skirters to dangle behind;
He's away for the moors in the teeth of the wind,
And they're running—they're running,
Go hark!

They're running—they're running, Go hark!
Let them run on and run till its dark!
Well with them we are, and well with them we'll be,
While there's wind in our horses and daylight to see:
Then jog along homeward, chat over the fight,
And hear in our dreams the sweet music all night
Of—They're running—they're running,
Go hark!

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Eversley Rectory,

1856.

Personal Reminiscences of Mr. H. S. Davenport.

Amusing and Otherwise.

My earliest recollections of Mr. Tailby date back nearly fifty years. The first time he ever spoke to me was to yell at me to Hold hard! and not over-ride hounds! It was during the Christmas holidays, when I was about ten years old, that I was given a ride on a hack named "Sultan," which Sir Richard Sutton had made a present of to one of my sisters. The conditions—imposed by a doting mother—were that I was not to go near hounds. Boy like, however, directly I was clear of the village, off I galloped towards Norton Gorse, as I thought that covert would be the first draw (Ashlands in those days had not been dreamed of, whilst Illston Grange was only in the building). My surmise was right. Before I sank what afterwards became known as the Ashlands Valley, I heard the cry of hounds approaching, and a minute later viewed the fox. I remained motionless whilst he passed within gunshot, and as soon as the racing pack had glanced by, proceeded temporarily to occupy a solitary place at their sterns that can have fallen to few when out hunting for the first time in their lives. The fox crossed the road just short of Cox's Lodge, near Billesdon, and was put to ground in the Skeffington Vale. Long before I got there on Sultan, however, I heard some one shouting from the background to me to "Hold hard"! "Hold hard" be hanged, I thought, as hounds were screaming along in front, with an abundance of room at their service. A minute or so later, still shouting and yelling, none other than the Master himself, Mr. Tailby, swooped down upon me, and quickly relegated me to a back seat. Where the rest of the field were I don't know. Mr. Tailby was certainly "out by himself," and not for the first time in his life. Later on I had many opportunities of admiring his bull-dog courage in the saddle, and can only suppose that it was a kind of second nature, or force of habit, that led him to try and cramp my ardour on the occasion in question; for, if ever a Master had to deal with a hard-riding, thrusting, bruising field, that master was Mr. Tailby in the Early Sixties, when High Leicestershire was a veritable sea of grass, and railways and wire were unknown within its borders.

I recall a frosty morning in the Glenn region during Sir Bache Cunard's reign, when we hunted, though it was perilous to do so. A lot of us were craning and funking a nasty style with a footboard that barred the way to the pack. Suddenly Mr. Tailby, the veteran of the party even in those days, pushed his way to the front with—"Here, let me make a way"—but he didn't; for though his horse slipped on the hard greasy turf and rapped the top rail hard fore and aft, it never broke, and the horse did not fall.

Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Tailby was not credited with the best of memories for hounds' names when he hunted them. The story is told that he once rated one named Aconite, whereupon a somewhat zealous official informed him that it was not Aconite but Affable. All the answer Mr. Tailby returned was—"I choose to call it Aconite."

Mr. Tailby did not often find himself pounded, but it was once his fate at the Stonton Brook, as I heard him relate one night at his own dinner table to the late Mr. Sam Reynell, a very famous Master of the Meath Hounds. The brook was in flood, and the late Lord Tredegar, then Godfrey Morgan, got first run at the only practicable spot. Horse and rider became engulfed, and blocked the way for Mr. Tailby, Jack Goddard and the rest of them, and when hounds were next seen they had killed and eaten their fox.

On Tuesday, November 9th, 1886, Mr. Tailby, on the way to meet the Cottesmore hounds at Cole's Lodge, galloped by the writer and, dispensing with the conventional form of greeting, called out just this—"Watch hounds to-day: we shall have a great run." It was a most remarkable prophecy, and before three hours had passed was conspicuously fulfilled. Half-a-gale was blowing when hounds were thrown into Launde Park Wood, and only about a score of people got away on terms with them to Launde Great Wood. Even then there had been time for a slipped crowd to right matters, but, fortunately for the few, 14 couples turned short back from the Robin o' Tiptoe end of the Great Wood with a fresh fox, and their rousing cry allayed the earlier fears. Meanwhile, 8 couples had slipped out for Woodborough, and though Will Neal was all for stopping them, he had to yield to the persistent cries of Go on! Go on, Neal! The sequel was a grand hunt, embracing a 13-mile point, to Asfordby, three miles the other side of Melton, where the fox was killed in the Wreake, and sank, a labourer being "commandeered" to strip himself, and fork its tattered remains from

the depths of the river, which he did. Hounds passed through Melton at 2 p.m. on their way home, the sprinkling of people who had got away after them, including the huntsman and H. Shipway (the first whipper-in), Mr. Baird (the Master), who with a solitary hound only caught them just beyond John o' Gaunt; Mr. Tailby, Mr. Arthur (now Sir Arthur) Fludyer, Mr. Fernie, Mr. Evan Hanbury, the late Count Zborowski, Mr. Gordon Cunard, the late Mr. Basil Cochrane, who hunted from Asfordby Hall and was brought back home by a gallant fox; Captain Frank Forester, who was put out of action through his horse cutting a leg at a stone wall on Woodborough Hill; the late Mr. W. Gosling, Mr. H. R. Finch, Captain (now Colonel) F. G. Blair, Mr. Stirling Stuart, Mr. E. C. Clayton, who was turned over by some uncompromising timber just beyond the Tilton and Launde Road at the very outset; the late Captain "Bay" Middleton, Mr. Granville Farquhar, the late Mr. F. Hamlyn, Captain Jacobson, Mr. Dunlop, the late Mr. W. G. Marshall, Mr. G. Parker, one lady only, Mrs. George Baird, and the writer. As for the truant 14 couples and the second whipper-in, they roamed the country for miles, accompanied by a huge field representing the flower of Leicestershire, and went home when at length the full scope of the disaster was realised.

At Skeffington Rectory in the old days, the conversation seldom strayed long from hunting, shooting, fishing, or sport and games of some kind. Once my mother took my father to task for encouraging us—we were five boys—to think and talk such a lot about sport, and then added, "Besides, at our ages"—they were over 70 and 80 respectively, my mother being the younger—"you and I ought to be thinking of going hence;" whereupon he demurely rejoined, "rather you than I!"

As I have always understood, one of John Leech's amusing illustrations in "Punch," depicting a considerable measure of freedom with "the bottle" on the part of our forefathers, owed its origin to a hard-riding Leicestershire cleric. "In the good old days" it was by no means uncommon for the women folk, who had exchanged the dining-room for the drawing-room—otherwise, and more correctly, the withdrawing-room,—to hear recurrent thuds through the partitioning wall, which denoted that chairs were being suddenly vacated by their better halves for the floor! Anyhow, the story went that on one occasion a host, although there had been no flagrant cases of drinking until subsidence beneath the table followed, thought it as well, just for the form of the

thing, to put a test, and said, "I suppose we are all capable of saying to the ladies that the scenery round here is truly rural?" "Course we can," hiccoughed the cleric, "sheenery's tooral rooral, lets go!"

A capital old fellow, of German extraction, who had learned to love hunting, once volunteered to me on arriving on foot—after a thirteen-mile walk in the spring—at his place, where there was a "lawn meet,"—"you'll find a barrel of beer in the saddle-room." Of course I expressed becoming gratitude for his offer, and was on my way to the saddle-room when the old chap overhauled me, and taking another good look at me through his spectacles, said, "I beg your pardon, but your place, I think, is in there," pointing simultaneously at the hall door.

The story is told of a hard-riding parson, who, on being asked whether he spelt the brook Kedron, mentioned in the scriptures, with a "K" or a "C," replied that he had never even heard of it; adding that he only knew of two brooks, the Brant and the Whissendine, and he could spell both, and thank heaven, jump both!

Names obviously cannot be given, but as showing the perhaps justifiable rage into which men can fling themselves on being jumped upon, the following is a humorous example: The victim, on regaining his feet, turned round, and shaking his fist at the man who had followed unpardonably close in his wake, and had also "got" down, yelled, "You, you something, something, something, I'd rather have a load of manure on top of me than such as you."

An occasion is recalled when the writer viewed a fox away from a covert, the Master being the first to respond to his view holloa. After a still-born puff on the horn, followed by "curse"; a second ineffectual attempt followed by "damn"; and a third followed by "blast"—the latter by no means the one he was aspiring to produce, I said, "Here! give it me," but the rapid arrival of the field put an end to a humorous situation.

The late Major E. F. Dawson, of Launde Abbey, told me the following: he was walking one day in the Park Wood, carrying a gun. After a time he was surprised to hear the mellow cry of hounds in the district, for on that particular day they had met far away. In due course the pack crashed into the wood, and two horsemen came galloping into view along one of the rides; when they saw

him, they pulled up short, one remarking to the other, "I say, here's a darned fellow with a gun!"

A very disreputable member of the now-a-days numerous fraternity known as "hunt runners" accosted me in Melton one afternoon with the usual request for "a drink." As it was obvious that he had already had more than enough, I promptly declined to do host; whereupon he drew himself up, and in slow, measured terms, delivered himself thus in a voice to be heard half way down the street—"Very well, Mr. Damport: don't you never come to me again for henny more 'unting hinformation." It should be stated that this fellow used to ply on the road between Houghton and Glenn Gorse every other Thursday, when Mr. Fernie's hounds were out in that region, and that as I was in the habit of going down by train from Melton, and was always a bit late, my form of greeting to the various wayfarers in gateways was, generally—"heard anything of the hounds?" Not that, needless to say, I was ever concerned to pay much heed to anything anyone chanced to tell me.

Many years ago—over 40—I hired a hack from a man named Broughton, of Billesdon, and rode off to some very popular Hunt Races. Before arriving I took the opportunity to test the owner's assurance that it could jump, with unfortunate results, for the brute, "put me down," and, as it was wet and dirty where we fell, I appeared on the course anything but trim and neat. My dishevelled state, however, did not deter a friend—who was destined later to become a shining light in the Holderness country—from asking me to join his party at luncheon. In those days there were not any tents, and in this particular case, luncheon was served *al fresco*, on a long table, in an adjoining paddock. Not caring, in my somewhat ragged plight, to mingle with a lot of smartly dressed women, I waited until the host and hostess and their party had returned to the course, before sauntering over to the paddock "for a bite." When I did so, I found sundry others of humble station in life bent on the same errand. Now for the point of the story: "I was sitting somewhat apart, by myself, and was suddenly accosted thus:" "What do you want to drink?" Looking up, I found a pompous butler at my side, and seeing an opened bottle of champagne on a table near, jerked my head in the direction of my glance, saying:—"Oh! give me some of that pop, please." "H'm! that's not for the likes of you," was the prompt rejoinder." He was not long, though, before being taught that it was!

I once saw Mr. Tailby jump an oxer near Rolleston, at the outset of a gallop to Billesdon Coplow; it was in the corner of a field, and the rails only extended about thirty yards, but so good was the take-off, it was too tempting for him to miss the opportunity. Always a man of few words, he laughingly remarked to me just afterwards—"I've had that place in my mind for years, but never a chance till to-day."

Mr. Tailby was not only noted for great hospitality, but also for keeping "a very good table." One day a Mr. St. John, a native of Hampshire, who used to hunt in the Shires, rode up and engaged my father in apparently some very private conversation; and a sister of mine, who was riding by his side, naturally dropped back a few paces so as not to be *de trop*. She did, however, catch the last few words; they were these—"the fish sauce was excellent, and the jelly tip-top." Mr. St. John had dined at Skeffington Hall the previous night!

East Norton Hall. East Norton Church.

Amusing Anecdote concerning a Gallant Major.

Nearly forty years ago the writer, with inexcusable mischief, was guilty of perpetrating what he at the time regarded as an innocent and harmless joke upon a gallant Major, whose family, like the writer's, was of ancient French origin—he being as was well known, a direct descendant of the Duc de———, who was chief Minister to Louis the——th,—by writing a paragraph to the *Leicester Journal*, stating that:—

> After due deliberation the French Government had decided to restore the Title and Estates of his noble ancestor to the gallant Major, who, at the time, was staying at his marine villa in the Isle of Wight—(where in reality he occupied modest apartments),—and went on to say that on the Duke's return to his hunting quarters, he would be sure to receive the hearty congratulations of his numerous friends, etc.

From the fact that the Government of France had become a Republic, I naturally concluded that the joke would be apparent to all, and to none more so than to the Major himself; but to my surprise and the no small amusement of his friends and neighbours, the Major not only failed to see the joke, but more than half persuaded himself that the intentions of the Government, as expressed in the paragraph, were not only possible but highly probable! The Major consequently became so highly elated that it was imperatively necessary for his friends to appear equally sanguine and act accordingly; therefore, when shortly afterwards, Mr. George Coleman held open the gate at the corner of Norton Gorse, at the same time exclaiming, "Make way for the Duke ———," "the Duke" rode through with the utmost dignity and condescension. The gratification and pleasure which I had thus unwittingly afforded the Major may best be imagined when I add that he cut the paragraph out of the journal

and was observed one night to be attaching it to the village pump, with the aid of a lantern; and strange to say, he was never disillusioned! It is only right to add that he was strictly entitled to the honour, of which first the Empire, and then the Republic had deprived his forefathers; and that by reason of his distinguished mien and appearance, few men could better have supported the high rank to which he was de jure born.

What the Butler knew!

Being a Story of a "Story"!

John Bainbrigge Story, Esq., J.P., of Lockington Hall, one Sunday morning betook himself to the butler's pantry, and with rather a shame-faced air—so it seemed to the butler—requested that worthy to mix him a stiff glass of whiskey and soda. The old butler, whilst attending to his master's requirements, ventured to remark that it was nearly church time, and soon afterwards himself proceeded to attend the service. He observed the squire enter and also leave the sacred edifice before the sermon commenced. When the service was over the butler walked round by the stables, and noticing an empty stall came to the conclusion that the squire had saddled a horse himself (although a very unusual thing for him to do) and ridden off—but where?

Now there had recently been rumours of Cock-fighting taking place at Donnington Park—the seat of the Marquess of Hastings—and the butler, at once grasping the situation, instantly surmised that thither the Squire had surreptitiously made his way; but like a good and faithful servant, determined to keep his own counsel. One o'clock and lunch time came, but not so the Squire! whose devoted wife thereupon asked the butler if his master had gone out? to which the butler discreetly replied, that he had

not seen the master. Time went on, and after waiting half-an-hour, as there was no sign of the Squire making his appearance, Mrs. Story ordered in the lunch—not without conveying an expression of her opinion that the butler knew more of his master's whereabouts than he seemed inclined to tell. After luncheon, the Squire's son, the Parson, came out to the butler and said: "Now look here, Taylor, its no use your denying; I'm sure you know where the Squire is," to which Taylor smilingly replied: "Of course I do, sir; but its no business of mine, and I wasn't going to 'let on' before the ladies," for which prudence, no doubt he was highly commended. The discreet butler now wisely thought it would be well to get the grooms and stable-men out of the way before the Squire should return; so invited them all up to his pantry, supplying them with as much ale as made them—well! pleased to remain there.

About three o'clock in came the Squire, and Taylor was the first to whom he confided that he *had* been over to see a bit of cock-fighting in a barn at Donnington Park, and that just as they were in the middle of the third main, with pretty high stakes on the board, a strong body of police attempted to force their way into the barn where the Marquess and his friends were assembled; who, realizing that as Mr. Story was a Magistrate, it would be doubly awkward for him to be found present, they quickly hoisted the squire up to a window at the back, by which he escaped just as the representatives of law and order succeeded in effecting an entry! The gist of the story, however lies in the fact that Mr. Story sat on the Bench the following day when the parties, whose names had been taken by the police, were represented by a Solicitor, and Mr. Story, in his capacity as Magistrate, performed the duty of imposing a fine upon his host the Marquess, and every person present—excepting himself!!—who, the reader may be inclined to think, deserved a double fine!

Favourite "Meets" and Coverts.

When recently requested by the writer to name his favourite hunting appointment and covert, without a moment's hesitation, Mr. Tailby answered, "Keythorpe to meet and draw Vowe's Gorse," and as the latter is rarely drawn blank, and both are not far from home, one can appreciate the reply.

But although the reputation of the respective coverts varies considerably in the course of a few years—evidence of which is to be observed in the foregoing extracts from Mr. Tailby's Journal--there is generally a favourite side of every covert from which, provided the wind is in the right quarter, the huntsman would prefer to see his fox break, and from which, assuming the scent to be good, the prospect of an extended gallop may confidently be anticipated.

Most hunting men will, however, agree that the best covert is the one that holds the best fox, and if it but be in Leicestershire, its particular locality is of secondary importance; and the "Meet" to be preferred is the quietest and most remote—the one which is situate furthest from the iron road and bricks and mortar. The one least likely to be over-run by foot people, or crowded out by carriages—and motors, must now be added!

Clashing Interests.—Foxes or Game.—Saddle v. Gun.

Although the majority of covert owners both hunt and shoot, there have always been a few who do neither, and some again who follow exclusively the one pursuit or the other, and it is curious to observe how members of the same family in successive generations change their pursuits, as occasionally they do their creed and politics.

A century ago reynard was viewed, in every sense, by shooting men, with great disfavour and sometimes with open and avowed hostility; and the man who could by fair means or foul encompass his death was esteemed a public benefactor; whereas to-day the vulpicide is generally regarded with contempt and aversion.

The accuracy of the above is easily demonstrated by an old letter recorded by my late gallant friend Capt. F. Chapman, in his most interesting history of the "Wensleydale Hounds, 1686-1907."

This letter was addressed by my grandfather, the Rev. Jacob Costobadie, Rector of Wensley 1802-28 (a considerable land-owner in the Dales, and as fond of the gun as his sons became attached to the chase) to the Second Lord Bolton, the original being in the possession of the present Baron.

The document draws his Lordship's attention to "the destruction of the farmers' lambs and the game caused by these vermin," which had become so numerous as to over-run the countryside, and suggesting (I quote from memory) that as hounds could not in that hilly district keep them down, "other means should be found to deal with them." But to come nearer home and to more recent times, it is well known that Lord Harborough was so averse to fox-hunting that he used to have traps set in Stapleford Park, and from time to time other owners and occupiers

became a bit of "a thorn in the side" of Masters and Committee. Whilst it must be admitted that when pheasants are first liberated in the woods a few may fall a prey to a vixen and her litter of cubs, as the birds soon learn to take to the branches, the toll exacted by the fox is not so very considerable after all. Still it can hardly be supposed that adherents of the chase and votaries of the gun view matters in quite the same light, or that their sentiments can be identical; for whereas the one desires to see Master Reynard increase and multiply; the other aims at a good Head of Game and desires his coverts undisturbed. Nevertheless, by the cultivation of mutual good-will and neighbourly regard, interests that might otherwise become "clashing," are usually happily reconciled, as whenever an owner preserves extensively, he has merely to request that his coverts shall not be drawn during the earlier part of the hunting season, for his wishes to be scrupulously observed; the Master will try in the New year to make up for time lost in the Old, and wherever such consideration is shown there will seldom be any grounds for unpleasantness.

Noted Pilots.—Cross-Country Riders.—Yeoman Farmers.

Amongst cross-country riders, whether judged by his performances in the Shires or in Ireland, most hunting men will be prepared to concede a foremost place to Captain "Bay" Middleton. Although the writer was not personally acquainted with the gallant Captain, they possessed a mutual friend in Ireland, who the Captain used to visit and from whom he purchased many of his best mounts. Captain Middleton used to tell his friend that an Irish horse, that will just tip a stone wall and seem to spring a second time whilst in the act, usually jumps so high and short as to require at least a season in the Shires to get accustomed to the greater width of fence and ditch.

When selecting his horses, it was no use to think that a groom or any deputy could satisfy the Captain by merely taking the horse over a few made fences. Before the horse became his property he must himself see what he could do ; and that not over an ordinary course, but over anything in the neighbourhood that chanced to come in his way : stone walls, timber, or even those most dangerous obstacles the double gates at a railway crossing, would be taken in and out—nothing came amiss.

But although straight riding undoubtedly is a proof of nerve and pluck, a man requires to be possessed of something more than either to prove a safe and desirable pilot in the hunting field. Even as the doctor requires to exercise his skill with patience and sympathy, so the horseman who undertakes this responsible position must not be lacking in either. He must have a thorough knowledge of the country ; must neither under-rate and still less over-rate the ability of his protége ; must be able to keep one eye on the hounds, and equally divide the other between his line and his charge. If the latter is qualified to ride straight, whatever confidence the pilot may have in his own mount it should be felt equally for that of his charge, who should always be equally well-mounted. Even then, the pilot must often be prepared for a self-denying ordeal, for whatever number of risks he may be prepared to take himself, he must be anxious to guard against disaster to the one following in his wake.

From the fact that Captain " Bay " Middleton had the honour of being selected to pilot H.I.M. the Empress of Austria (herself a noted horsewoman) across Leicestershire, and received Her Majesty's grateful acknowledgements, it may be inferred that the gallant Captain not only possessed all the necessary qnalifications, but performed his allotted duty with pleasure and satisfaction, both to the Royal equestrian and to himself.

Dick Webster, I remember well, as must everyone else

acquainted with the hunting field thirty or forty years ago, although he hunted more frequently with the Quorn than with Mr. Tailby. As a cross-country rider he was noted for good nature and daring, was a bruiser to hounds, and a good man over a steeplechase course, although he never could resist the inclination to chaff the jockey immediately in his rear. This propensity upon several occasions cost him the race, for when he had it well in hand, by such manœuvring he would lose it on the post—a characteristic which never deserted him. At this period he used to farm extensively, and it being observed that his ploughmen always sat down in the middle of the field to eat their lunch, someone was curious enough one day to ask them why they did not seek the usual shelter of the hedge, to which one of them replied:

"Well, ye see, Sir, it be like this ere; when maister "rides round we niver knows which side he be acoming "into the field, as he allus jumps the hedge, and if we "wore a sitting under it, he might like as not come a-top "of us."

I well remember one day towards the end of the run, the going was very heavy, and Dick Webster's horse had been laboriously pounding along almost up to his hocks over a ploughed field (there was more plough in those days), when he failed to clear the fence in front of him, and having grassed Dick, there the horse still lay as quietly as if shot, whilst Dick, now on his feet, the reins in his hands, which he had not let go, looking down on the prostrate form of the underbred, shouted out, "His grandmother's name was "Smiler," I'll be bound!

I have always understood that Dick Webster belonged to that good old yeoman class—now all but extinct—who were deservedly regarded as the very backbone of the country and certainly of field sports—prosperous men who farmed their own broad acres, bred and handled their own horses, and knew how to ride them.

I suppose there are limits, however, even to the worship of Diana, and it is to be feared, that whilst gloriously careering over the wide pastures of Leicestershire, Dick did not pay heed to the old proverb, which says:—

> He who by the plough would thrive,
> Must either hold the plough or drive.

For although he began life under such favourable conditions he did not thrive; bad seasons came, sheep died of fluke, etc., and like many another good man at this period, he suffered serious reverses.

With advancing years and no horses of his own, he was glad to "school" a rough customer for owner or dealer; but towards the last even the latter seemed unable to find him a mount, and as he gradually fell into indigent circumstances he began to feel himself forsaken, and to realize as many men have done before, and since, that:—

> It's a very good world to live in,
> To spend, and to lend, and to give in;
> But to beg or to borrow, or get back one's own,
> 'Tis the very worst world that ever was known!

But, whoever else might fail to render him assistance, there was one who did not forget him when the sun of his prosperity had set, and this was the old fox-hunting Parson, the Vicar of Norton. And when the end was approaching, Dick said he did not want to see "no town Parson," but sent a special messenger seven miles to his Reverence, by whose side he had ridden many hundreds, as the only one likely to afford him comfort and consolation. At that last interview, a brave attempt to cheer him up, by recalling the happy past, succeeded in eliciting from the dying Nimrod that he had thoroughly enjoyed life; but for all that, he was inclined to think the Preacher was right in describing life as "all Vanity."

Apropos of above, I may remark that probably most of

us, when we get into years, become reconciled, however reluctantly, to similar views: even as—

King Solomon and King David led very naughty lives,
With their hundreds of concubines, and very numerous wives;
But when these ancient worthies failed to profit by their charms—
King Solomon wrote the Proverbs, and King David wrote the Psalms.

"Wire, ware wire."—The Old Black's Leap.

When land was enclosed or sub-divided years ago, it was the custom for the landowner to supply the materials in the shape of posts, rails and quick-set; and for the tenant to find the labour in planting on a bank, and erecting the posts and rails on either side. In a few years a handsome permanent hedge would grow up, impervious to cattle, sheep, or horses, affording admirable shelter for stock as a breakwind against the wintry blast.

By the time the timber had served its purpose of protecting the blackthorn, and perished, the strong double-hedgerow—the pride and glory of Leicestershire—had attained maturity, and required a good horse and bold rider to negotiate.

Although the presence of the hedge-row timber adds so much to the peculiar charm of the English landscape, there can be no doubt that the damage done to the hedge on either side was one of the principal reasons of that insidious danger to sportsmen—wire—being brought into use.

At what date wire was first introduced for the purpose of protection or strengthening of fences, I am unable to say positively, although I observe Mr. Davenport writes of it as being practically non-existent in the sixties; if so, its advent was not far off, as I had good reason to remember, ten

years later; even then, however, the attenuated twisted article had not made its appearance, and still later came the worst of all—the barbed variety—so cruel in its punishment of horse and hound. The first wire to line the fences and ditches was of a stout heavy rusty make, about ¼ or ⅜ of an inch thick—never seen to-day—which, at any rate, had the merit of being sufficiently visible for a horse to rise at occasionally, if the posts were not too far apart. From its weight, and being so unwieldy, it was not run through holes, but was lodged on the top, or stapled to the sides of the posts, and consequently did not offer so much resistance. It was no uncommon thing then for men to practise their horses to jump at a coat flung across a wire—and it was surprising how soon they faced it—not infrequently it was put into practice in the field, and may have obviated many a bad fall.

Although unwilling to bring my own adventures into prominence, as the syllabus of the volume mentions the Old Black's leap, and I happened to be on his back at the time, I will give my first experience of wire—the old-fashioned sort—when as a stripling of about 10 stones, I one day found myself astride this powerful old steeplechase horse. He stood at least 16-3, and with my very light weight—as the sequel will show—could jump anything. He possessed wonderful quarters and shoulders, an ugly ewe-neck and a big bony head, but withal was quite able to carry it.

I was only riding with a double-rein snaffle, and the old stager was really far too much for a juvenile to handle; try how I would, I simply could not pull him together; so before hounds broke covert I gave him a breather round a big ploughed field, resorting to all the tactics I knew to induce him to describe a circle. However, this only sufficed to warm his blood, and I could foresee that I was in for either riding over hounds, some unlucky Nimrod, or chancing on some like disaster. Hounds found at Norton

Gorse; scent was good, and getting away on very good terms, they crossed the Leicester and Gaulby Road, running in the direction of the brook as though for Ilston Grange, but bore to the left, making for the direction of the Ashlands, by which time—like John Gilpin—I was off, and the Old Black settled fairly down, having taken all in his stride since we got away. Upon reaching the fence which lines the road leading from Gaulby to Ilston, however, I perceived two riderless horses who had rushed in where "angels fear to tread," and heard their riders (their whips uplifted) shout—"Wire—ware wire,"—which caution saved several others, myself included, who, however, experienced great difficulty in reining in my impetuous steed. The fence was a new quick-set hedge; no ditches, but rails on either side. The two horsemen who had tackled it discovered—to their discomfiture—a thick heavy wire stapled to the off-posts. As hounds had only been running for a few minutes the field were still pretty well together, and soon noticed the rails broken in two places, one on the near, the other on the off side; the gaps however not being immediately opposite, but the one on the off side several yards lower down the fence, and here the wire had been pulled out into the road. Several horsemen now rode single file through the first gap, and walking their horses down by the side of the hedge they crossed over it lower down, and out through the other gap into the lane, carefully avoiding the wire which had been drawn from the staples. However, this method of circumventing the enemy was too tardy a process to suit the old black, who soon became too restive to take his place in the zig-zag procession, began to rear, and before I could pull him aside, gave a mighty spring and cleared at one bound, not only the double, but sailed over the hind quarters of a good-sized nag, standing at right-angles in front of him. But although the old black's wonderful leap, at a stand, had cleared the timber, he caught the wire which lay in coils upon the road; marvellous to say, however, it did not bring him down, only sawed at his chest and my right leather! and once free from its unwelcome

embrace, with nothing worse than a bruise or two, we got away again, thus stealing a march upon the more patient equestrians, who continued to crawl through the maze. The old black had his reward, for thanks to his courage and pace, we soon regained the place temporarily lost, and overhauled the pack as we left Frisby to the left, and (trusting to my recollection of forty years ago), bore to the right between Skeffington and Rolleston Spinnies, leaving Tugby and Keythorpe wide on the left, through Rolleston Wood, the fox being killed in the open just before reaching Ilston Village. The longest point would not exceed five miles, but as we almost described a horse-shoe, I think we covered about ten miles, and with this one check it was a splendid gallop from start to finish.

Some Reminiscences of Sir Willoughby Maycock, K.C.M.G.,

which from his long residence in his younger days at Gumley and Foxton, the intimate acquaintance both of himself and his parents with Mr. Tailby, and his personal recollection of the Billesdon Hunt can hardly fail to interest readers.

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80 St. George's Square,
London.

November 14th, 1913.

Dear Mr. Costobadie,

I feel some diffidence in responding to your kind suggestion that I should send you some recollections of the many happy days I have spent in my youth with the Billesdon Hunt. I always think of the old adage that "Self is a subject on which all can be eloquent but few entertaining." I have reached a time of life when 'the memory of the past' has far more attractions than the prospects of the future, but in dealing with it the difficulty is to avoid becoming prosy. I trust at any rate that some of my reminiscences may not lay me open to that charge, so here goes for what they are worth.

I was born in 1849, and my parents, after a brief residence at Husbands Bosworth, took Gumley Hall from Sir William Hartopp in September 1852, and continued to reside there till September 1861, when they moved to Foxton Lodge, about a mile off, and remained there till September 1875, when they emigrated to Leamington, where they spent the remainder of their days. My father, Dottin Maycock, had been first in the 16th Lancers and afterwards in the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons. He was generally admitted to be one of the handsomest men in the British Army in his day. He could never afford

Sir Willoughby Maycock, K.C.M.G.

A. J. Daniels, Photographer.

to keep a large stud of hunters, and the up-keep of so large a house as Gumley taxed his resources to the utmost. Nor was he ever a thrusting rider. Like Mr. Jorrocks, he thought that little places were apt to result in "werry nasty falls" and many were the gaps that he preferred 'leading over' to jumping. Yet he was by no means deficient in courage. I well remember as a little boy being out riding with him when we found a gang of poachers from Smeeton calmly dragging the Canal in one of our fields at the foot of Gumley Village. There were about half-a-dozen of them, as desperate a set of scoundrels as I ever set eyes on. Father was off his horse like a shot, and chucking the reins to me, dashed into the middle of them, dragged their trawl net out of the water, and cut it into shreds. Meanwhile they threatened to do for him and had their knives out. I was terrified, I'm bound to state, fully expecting to see him killed and implored him to come away. Fortunately it all ended in 'cuss words,' and he rated me soundly afterwards for being so frightened. He was very popular with the hunting men, and both at Gumley and Foxton dispensed hospitality pretty lavishly, and enjoyed a good deal from his neighbours in return. We all loved dear old Gumley with its wood, its primroses, and blue bells, its pond and its pike, and we all wept copiously when the day came to leave it, with the dogs and cats—the latter with their feet well buttered—for a humbler and less costly abode at Foxton Lodge, which has since become the Vicarage. But I must 'hark back.'!

Gumley was usually in those days the first meet of the Season with Mr. Tailby's hounds, and has been so ever since. My riding recollections date from 1860, but I see from my diary that the opening day that year, on November 5th, was the XII. Milestone on the Welford Road, and it was not till the following Monday the 12th, that the meet was at Gumley. The recollections of that day are still fresh in my memory, and are associated

with a strong aroma of pipe clay and cherry brandy in the front hall. Cherry brandy was much appreciated as 'jumping powder,' and we always had a liberal supply on hand for the opening day. My father had purchased for me for £12 a nimble brown pony whom we named Gipsy. He could jump like a stag, but was disfigured by a huge wart under one of his eyes. Ponies were cheaper then than now. I saw a lot of sport on Gipsy for many years. I extract the following record of my first day's hunting from a diary I kept religiously.

"I began on Gipsy at Gumley in cords and leggings (*sic*), a poor dress for hunting, but I soon had a pair of white cords and varnished leggings, which made a good substitute for Napoleons, and lasted me all the season." I well remember what weighed on my little soul when I penned these lines. There was another little boy out hunting who excited my jealousy; he was just about my age, perhaps a few months older. He had the most immaculate white buck-skin breeches, butcher boots, real spurs and iron stirrups (I had to ride in leather toe-caps), a perfect fitting black Melton jacket by Wolmerhausen, a white cambric tie with a coral pin, and a smart pot hat; moreover, he was mounted on a horse of elephantine proportions, with a rat-tail. He was a perfect picture in all respects, and good looking withal. I wanted to be rigged out on precisely the same lines as that little boy, but it couldn't be done. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.* That little boy was Billy Hay, of Great Bowden, in after life my dearest and most devoted friend, and of whom more anon. His father was very proud of him, as indeed he might well be. But to return to the diary record of the first day.

> Gumley, Monday, November 12th, 1860. They first drew the Wood blank and the old covert, drew the new covert, found and broke in the direction of Laughton, but turned to the right pointing for Saddington, and had a good run by the reservoir, making a ring through the wood back into the covert, when they ran to ground in a rabbit hole; found a

Dottin Maycock, Esquire.

second, and ran out straight for Laughton Hills and lost him; found at John Ball, and in about half-an-hour they killed him in covert; went to Jane Ball and ran to ground in the Gorse.

NOTE.—This being my first day, and Gipsy being quiet, I enjoyed it very much. There were some very stiff fences in the first run, and five all came down at once at one jump.

So runs the record of a little boy of eleven, of his first day with Mr. Tailby's hounds.

I remember some of the events of the year 1860, far more distinctly than many which occurred a month ago. For example, who of those who had the good fortune to be on the hill at Farndon on the 18th of April of that year, will ever forget the memorable contest for the first Grand National Hunt Steeplechase. It was my first visit to a race course, and there have since been occasions when I have sometimes wished it had been the last. The cold was intense. Mr. Marshall and Mr. James Douglass, of Harborough—of whom more anon,—had mapped out a course of four miles long comprising some twenty obstacles, many of which were appallingly stiff; real natural Leicestershire post and rails and oxers, to say nothing of a deep and wide artificial brook that wanted a lot of jumping. Thirty-one competitors, after an abnormal delay, faced the starter; victory resting with Bridegroom, admirably ridden by the late Mr. E. C. Burton, of Daventry, who died in 1907, rightly described by Sir John Astley in his "Recollections" as "The best all-round athlete and sportsman in England." Mr. Symonds, of Oxford, got second with the Freshman, ridden by Mr. Lington, and Alec Goodman was third on the Liberator. What a splendid lot of horsemen rode in that chase: Mr. Edwards (George Ede, who was killed at Liverpool), Mr. Thomas (Tom Pickernell), Mr. Ekard (Mr. E. T. Drake), Frank Gordon, Major Painter, Mr. Bevill, and Captain Jonas Hunt—all, alas! dead and gone!! Bridegroom belonged to 'Cherry' Angell, who lived close by at Lubbenham, so

the victory was most popular. Bridegroom ran sixth in the Grand National at Liverpool that year; in 1861 he was fourth; and in 1862 second. Mr. Angell built a course as much like that at Aintree as possible on a farm close to Lubbenham, so that when his horses got to Liverpool they might feel at home. Having formed an intimacy with Charles Cornell, who trained Mr. Angell's horses, he often gave me a leg up on Bridegroom a few years later, and many a time have I ridden him over the course in question with others of Mr. Angell's string, including Alcibiade, who won the National at Liverpool, after the closest finish on record, in 1865. Bridegroom was a grand fencer and a hard puller, but he knew his business to perfection, and all I had to do was to sit tight and leave the rest to him. Mr. Angell won the Grand National Hunt for the second time at Market Harborough in 1861 with Queensferry, also ridden by Mr. Burton. In 1862 the meeting was transferred to Rugby, but it came back to Harborough again, and for the last time in 1863, though the course had then undergone considerable changes, and was not nearly so stiff as on the first occasion. Lord Calthorpe's Socks, ridden by Alec Goodman, won in 1863. Two years ago I rented a place for a few weeks at Great Bowden, where poor Hugie Owen was living when he was killed, and one day I rode over to Farndon and Lubbenham and had a look round at the old spot, which was so full of interest to me. A small cross in the Churchyard marks the last resting place of Charles John Cornell, who died July 22nd, 1874, at the age of fifty-three. He was a cheery red-faced little fellow who always wore a hat cocked on one side, but what he didn't know about schooling chasers wasn't worth knowing. Mr. Harry Mills was then living in Cherry Angell's old house, and he took me over it as well as the stables, and showed me where Alcibiade was buried—after being perhaps prematurely destroyed—in the paddock at the back of them. There still remains one historical stable door with the eight gilded plates nailed on it which Mr. Angell's celebrated chasers wore on the occasion of

their victories. It is so full of interest that I append the inscriptions thereon as follows :—

1. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the first Grand National Hunt Steeplechase. 4 miles. Market Harborough, April 18th, 1860. Carried 12 st. 31 ran.

2. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the Liverpool Autumn Steeplechase, November 12th, 1862. Carried 10 st. 4 lb. 3 miles. 6 ran.

3. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the Farndon Hill Steeplechase, April 8th, 1861. Carried 12 st. 3 miles. 4 ran.

4. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the Liverpool Hunt Club Steeplechase, April 12th, 1862. Carried 12 st. 4 miles. 8 ran.

5. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the Liverpool Hunt Club Steeplechase, April 10th, 1863. Carried 12 st. 4 miles. 9 ran.

6. *Bridegroom;* Winner of the Wetherby Steeplechase Cup, value 100 Sovs. Carried 13 st. 5 ran.

7. *Alcibiade;* Winner of the Grand National Steeplechase, Liverpool, March 14th, 1865. Carried 11 st. 4 lb. 23 ran.

8. *Queensferry;* Winner of the second Grand National Hunt Steeplechase, Market Harborough, April 18th, 1861. Carried 12 st. 17 ran.

While on the subject of 'chasing,' one of the smartest men that ever followed Mr. Tailby's hounds was the celebrated steeplechase rider, Charley Boyce. How he won the Grand National at Liverpool, for the late George Hodgman, on Emigrant, in 1857, with his right arm strapped to his side owing to a recent hunting accident is fully described in that Veteran's most interesting book "Sixty Years on the Turf." Therein he says "of Boyce, as a man or as a rider, I know not how to write too eulogistically. To my mind, over a country, he was so far the best of his contemporaries that I should not care to select a second. He was a splendid specimen of physical development, and singularly handsome; his manners were charming." I can heartily endorse all that Hodgman says. Boyce lived at Wigston in the latter part of the sixties, and many a

pleasant chat we had together. I remember he used to tell me that the greatest trial to his nerves was the approach to the first fence at Aintree, at racing pace. I had a hobby in those days for collecting race cards, and as I have never ceased to collect one thing or another, and destroyed little or nothing of any interest for over fifty years, there is a cheerful prospect in store for my executors, administrators, and assigns. Among them is the following letter from Charley Boyce.

THE CEDARS, WIGSTON,
April 6th, 1866.

W. R. D. MAYCOCK, ESQ.—

Dear Sir,

Only returned home last night, or would have sent these before. I am ashamed of sending such a shabby lot. Will save them more carefully in future. We'd shocking bad weather at Newmarket: Baron Rothschild's "Robin Hood"* was beaten by Lord Stamford's "The Peer" through Wells mistaking the Winning Post. I am going to Croydon this afternoon, and am sorry to see the weather does not promise to be very agreeable there. A nice Woodland run with the Pytchley yesterday, and got thoroughly soaked in the afternoon.

Your obedient Servant,
CHARLES F. BOYCE.

I remember very well one day in the early sixties, riding home from hunting with my father, by the side of Stonton Wood. Suddenly we heard the sound of horses galloping behind us, two people flashed by and were over the fence and in front of us in the twinkling of an eye. They were larking home after a blank day, or something approaching it. One was a man in black, the other a woman. The man had a perfect seat, very upright, tall, thin, and as smart as paint. His companion wore a habit that fitted

* He clearly meant "Robin" not "Robin Hood." There were only two runners, and they laid 5—2 on Robin.—W.M.

"SKITTLES."

her like a glove, and a bit of cherry ribbon round her neck. In short she was a perfect dream, she made a remark to her pilot as she passed by which we both heard distinctly, and which made a lasting impression on me. I am afraid I cannot give it word for word, but it was to the effect that, she felt convinced, that when she reached home, a certain portion of her anatomy would probably be of much the same hue as the tie she wore round her neck. I noticed my dear old father biting his lips to suppress his merriment, and trying to look as if he hadn't heard it. I asked him if he knew who they were, "Yes," he replied, "the man is Jim Mason and the woman "Skittles." That was, I think, the first time I ever saw the man, perhaps the finest horseman in England, who had won the first Grand National at Liverpool, on Lottery, in 1839. He used to pilot Mrs. Jack Villiers and "Skittles," on alternative days with Mr. Tailby's hounds, both of them rare horsewomen. Mason died on October 9th, 1866, in his fifty-first year, of consumption, and lies in Kensal Green. Skittles is, I believe, still 'on this side,' but I have no intention to write her biography. No record, however, of the Billesdon Hunt, could be complete without some reference to her. One fine day she left the skirt of her habit in a Bullfinch, and was walking about in a white petticoat and Jack Boots. The question arose who should go to her assistance, and the momentary difficulty was to find a 'married man.' "Are you a married man"? was the interrogatory addressed to more than one of those who were present, among others to my esteemed friend Mr. Thorp, the Vicar of Burton Overy, who at that time was regarded as a comfirmed batchelor. His negative reply was given with an emphasis that caused much merriment, and the story went the round of the hunt for weeks afterwards. In 1862, I was carted off to school at Stonton Wyville Rectory, of which the late Rev. T. Burnaby was incumbent, and where I had perhaps the most miserable time of my life. Billy Hay was there at the time, and

acted as my guide, philosopher and friend, and it was a great blow to me when he left shortly after my advent for Eton, where he distinguished himself later in the school matches at Lords. Another youth at this seminary was a young Redfern, whose father was then on terms of close intimacy with "Skittles," and often brought her out with the hounds. One day they met at Stonton Wyville, and "Skittles" gave Master Jimmy Redfern a real half-sovereign, all for himself. It came as a little golden godsend at the time and was duly 'blown' at the sweet shop. 'Jimmy' got awfully roasted about this gift, as may be imagined.

"Skittles," distinguished herself by jumping the steeple-chase brook in cold blood at Market Harborough, in 1861, not in 1860, as has been so frequently stated. The writer of 'Our Van,' in Baily, devoted some space to the circumstance at the time. Here I must take leave of "Skittles." Take her for all in all, I doubt if we shall ever look upon her like again. I send you a photograph of her taken many years ago. It can hardly fail to interest both the old 'uns who remember her, and the younger generation, many of whom have never heard of her. So I hope you'll think it worthy of re-production in the 'Annals.' I need hardly say it is very scarce.

My father enjoyed nothing more than a 'deal' with Mr. Arthur Hames, of Leicester. They used to haggle for hours, in the course of which a lot of friendly *badinage* passed on both sides. One fine day father laid out some thirty odd pounds on an old chestnut horse which he presented to me, and many a 'joy ride' he gave me with the hounds. True, he roared like a bull, and one could hear him a mile off, but at his own pace, which was not fast, he could go on for ever and a day. He was the finest timber jumper I ever saw, not even excepting that wonderful grey pony on which the Braithwaite brothers from Stackley, performed such prodigies over posts and rails in those days. But wild horses couldn't persuade

my old crock to jump water a foot wide. I think that some time or another in his career he must have gone near getting drowned, so great was his aversion to this element. I was riding this horse one day, when I had the misfortune to go sideways at a small fence at which Mr. Tailby was riding straight, and we collided; he apostrophized me vehemently, and I've no doubt I richly deserved it. Later on, however, on the same day, the whole field came to a deadlock in the corner of a large meadow somewhere near Medbourne, if I remember right. An inpregnable bullfinch formed the right and left boundaries, and there were six stiff new rails in the corner with rough black stony soil on either side for taking off and landing. Through these rails the hounds went full cry with a burning scent, but not a soul would have them at any price. Now, thought I, for 'death or glory.'! So like George Cheek in soapy sponge, I 'backed my Giraffe,' and sent him at them for all I was worth. He topped them beautifully, just touching one with his hind leg, and for a brief space I experienced the delightful sensation of having the hounds to myself. But it was not for long. Mr. Tailby had alone remained to watch my performance, and came after me. His horse hit the rails very hard, I won't be sure that he didn't break one. As he passed me, which he soon did, on a much fleeter steed, he remarked, "Well done, Willoughby, I forgive you." You can guess how elated I felt. He told my father about it afterwards, saying, "I couldn't be cut down by a boy, or I'm d—d if I'd have had them." We were by ourselves for two or three fields, when a check enabled the tail to catch us up. But it was *the* day of my life!

It would probably be at the latter end of the sixties that I had left the hounds rather early in the day, somewhere near Langton Caldwell, and was riding home down the road which leads from Church Langton to the Midland railway bridge. Suddenly I heard on my left the familiar sound of hounds in full cry, and there sure

enough they were, streaming down the hill of a large meadow heading straight for the railway. Not a soul was with them, till presently one man in scarlet, who must have pounded the field and done something big East Langton way came pounding along someway behind the hounds. There was no getting over the railway, so the horseman made a detour to the right, and put his gee at a stake-bound fence on the side of the road where I was standing. The rider was Captain Arthur Smith of the Carabineers, one of the hardest men to hounds that ever crossed a horse, and known to all sportsmen as 'Doggie.' Just as good between the flags as he was with hounds, he has won no fewer than four Grand National Hunt Chases, between 1864 and 1880. Though 74, he is as hale and hearty as ever, and still holds his own with the best, and bravest in the hunting field. I remember seeing him win every race but one on the card at a Burrough Hill meeting many years ago, when he lived at Melton with the Behrens brothers, Horatio and Julias. Lots of men can go well to hounds on perfect horses but 'Doggie' could 'get there' and stay there on almost anything. May his shadow never grow less, and when I last saw him a few weeks back grouse 'shooting' in the Army and Navy stores, I am happy to say it showed no tendency to do so. He now resides near Horsham.

The Billesdon Hunt has been, fortunately, fairly free from fatal casualties, only two or three that I can call to mind for the moment. Many members of the Hunt will remember poor Lord Somerville, who came to a tragic end in November 1868. He was only twenty-nine when he was killed. Reserved in manner, he was one of the earliest cigarette smokers that I remember in the hunting field. He came over with dear old Parson Davenport, from Skeffington, to dine with my people at Foxton very shortly before the fatal accident. My old friend, the late Capt. F. J. King,—King of Kirby Gate fame, better known as "Terror" King—in his interesting recollections of "Half

a Century's Hunting," which appeared in "Baily" in 1906, referring to the tragedy says :—

> We were out with Mr. Tailby, and were running from Manton Gorse; the ground was greasy to a degree; poor Somerville, Captain Smith and I all rode, I may say, together, at a low post and rails, but wide of each other. I never knew that anyone had fallen, but Somerville's horse, a favourite mare called Honesty, slipped, chested the rail, and landed completely on to him. Death must have been instantaneous.

Undoubtedly it was, blood emerging from his eyes, ears and nose. Dick Webster, that cheery, noisy rough-rider from Hallaton, so long familiar with the Billesdon Hunt, said he had ridden the horse last, and that it was not his fault but solely that of the ground, just recovering from a hard frost.

Poor Hugh Owen's fatal accident as Mr. Fernie's hounds were going from Kibworth way to draw Langton Caldwell in March 1908, is probably too fresh in everyone's memory to call for any details, besides which it is outside the period within which I must confine my own recollections. He is buried in a picturesque little cemetery just outside Great Bowden village, in a grave surmounted by a stone border of abnormal length. There is also a very remarkable allegorical memorial window to him in Great Bowden Church, which is worth inspecting by the passer-by.

Vol. LXXXV. of Baily not only contained "Half a Century's Hunting Recollections," by "Terror" King, but also two particularly interesting articles entitled "Recollections of Seventy-five Years' Sport," by the veteran Robert Fellowes, who resided at Bitteswell, near Lutterworth, in the sixties, and was a keen follower of Mr. Tailby's hounds as well as the Pytchley. Both these writers have lots to say about the "Billesdon Hunt," its runs and its riders. The last named referring to my old home, wrote: "Gumley Wood was at one time unintentionally spoiled as a covert by the Clergyman of

Gumley. He was a mighty collector of moths; he so bedaubed with treacle the trees in the wood that the foxes would not lay in it." Now the Rectory adjoined Gumley Hall, and the incumbent, from 1854 to his death in 1897, was the well-known entomologist, the Rev. Andrew Matthews. He was born on the day of the battle of Waterloo, and first initiated me into the Latin tongue. He had a gardener named West; one day in May 1860, I saw this man with his back towards me potting plants in the parson's grounds. The temptation was too great to resist, so picking up a stone I took a shot at him, and hit him plump where the body first meets the chair; then realising the danger of the situation for the first time I fled precipitately, and took refuge behind a tombstone in the churchyard. But the exasperated gardener was after me like a shot, banged me about the head rather unmercifully, so much so that it ached for a week afterwards. An old medical attendant had always pronounced my head to be my weak spot, and needing great care. My father was furious, and promptly took out a summons for assault against West. Mr. Fisher, solicitor, of Market Harborough, was retained for the prosecution, and Mr. James Douglass for the defence. I tell this anecdote because it was the first occasion of my meeting with Mr. Douglass, one of the hardest riders with Mr. Tailby, and for many years afterwards Secretary to the Billesdon Hunt. He terrified me in his cross examination, and in the end the Harborough bench bound the defendant over to keep the peace. I had some correspondence with Mr. Douglass in 1908, a few months before his lamented death, in the course of which I reminded him of our first meeting. In his reply, dated 27th October, 1908, he wrote: "Your enquiry takes me back a good many years, and of course I well recollect your appearance at the court house, though I don't think you were much afraid. What a naughty boy you were then!" I well remember seeing his memorable match with old 'Matt' Oldacre, both riding over seventeen stone, be it remembered. I penned the following obituary notice of Mr.

Douglass for "Horse and Hound," after his death in March 1909, which details the history of this match, and which I think merits recording in the "Annals."

Mr. James Heger Douglass.

We greatly regret to have to record the somewhat sudden death on the 13th inst. of Mr. James Heger Douglass, of Market Harborough, and our regret will be shared especially by the older division of hunting men who pursued the fox in the palmy days of Mr. Tailby's Mastership. Though riding over seventeen stone, he was always at the top of the hunt, being an accomplished and fearless horseman in his day. Enjoying a large practice as a solicitor at Harborough, he occupied the position of Clerk to the Magistrates there for over forty years. His handsome and accomplished wife, who predeceased him several years ago, was a sister of Captain George Warwick Hunt, of Balaclava fame. Mrs. Douglass was endowed with all the courage and hard riding attributes of her intrepid brother "Jonas," who died in 1906, and few names appeared more frequently in the records of good runs in the Harborough neighbourhood than those of Mr. Douglass and his wife. He was also at one time Secretary to the familiarly called "Billesdon Hunt," which, to his great regret, his sense of self-respect compelled him to resign. Those who are familiar with the circumstances which brought about his withdrawal from an office he had honourably filled for many years thought the majority of the Hunt Committee treated him in anything but a handsome fashion, so much so that the Chairman, the late Colonel James Baillie, and Mr. Mills both resigned in consequence.

The writer of these notes recalls a very sporting event at which he had himself the good fortune to be present, on March 15th, 1869, some particulars of which can hardly fail to be of special interest to our readers just now. In those days there resided at Clipstone, in Northamptonshire, a highly-respected and ponderous yeoman, by name Matthew Oldacre, a prominent member of the Pytchley Hunt. The late Mr. Nethercote, in his history of that Hunt, thus alluded to that worthy:—'In the noble army of Northamptonshire yeomen who go well with hounds, the foremost place may fairly be assigned to a heavy-weight, who has no superior across a country. In Matthew Oldacre, of Clipstone, we have one of

those exceptional organisations in whose hearts there seems to be no room for fear, and to whom the class of animal they ride seems to be a matter of no material consequence.' A discussion arose as to whether 'Matt' or Mr. Douglass was the better man, and the outcome of it was that a match was arranged between them, Mr. Oldacre to represent the Pytchley and Mr. Douglass Tailby's Hunt. The match was for £25 aside, and a stiff course was mapped out on Mr. Paulett's farm at Theddingworth, consisting of some fifteen natural jumps, including a widened dammed-up rivulet, which made a water jump seventeen feet wide. Mr. Oldacre rode 17st. 12lb., and Mr. Douglass 17st. 5lb., so that the latter had to put up 7lb. dead weight to equalise matters. All the fox-hunting community and the yokels turned up for miles around. Mr. Douglass made the running, 'Matt' thinking he could beat him for pace at the finish. 'Matt's' horse refused at the water, possibly owing to the cheers from the crowd at Mr. Douglass clearing it in fine style. This gave the last named a commanding lead of some two or three hundred yards, and he sailed home an easy winner, though only by a couple of lengths. But for the fiasco at the water jump the probability is that the Pytchley yeoman would have been the victor in this memorable contest. He was in truth a grand old man, some years Mr. Douglass's senior, and has long since 'passed in his checks.' By way of parenthesis, it may be mentioned that the flags utilised on this occasion were the very same that were used for the first Grand National Hunt Steeplechase at Farndon Hill nine years previously, when Mr. 'Cherry' Angell's Bridegroom, ridden by Mr. E. C. Burton, beat a large field. With these remarks we must bring our brief notice of the deceased sportsman to a close. He was laid in his last resting-place at the Market Harborough Cemetery on Monday.

Take him for all in all, it may be doubted if we shall ever look upon his like again. Brave, handsome, just, and generous, he was the embodiment of every quality that commends itself to admirers of physical manhood; in short, just such a hero as George Lawrence was wont to idealise in his novels. May the earth rest lightly on him!

All the older members of the Billesdon Hunt will remember 'Jonas' Hunt. He was brother-in-law to old Mr. Hay, of Bowden, whose assistance he frequently invoked to get rid of the bailiffs, who were his constant

and unwelcome guests, when he hunted from Stackley in the sixties. He was as hard as nails and as brave as a lion. An admirable portrait and biography of him appeared in Baily's Magazine of January 1907, but I can't refrain from relating one anecdote of him, which I don't think has ever been printed. There was a dear old fellow named Markham, who hunted for many years from Melton. In the latter days of his life, his brain was not quite what it once was, and he not infrequently approached strangers who were unaware of his infirmity. He selected 'Jonas' Hunt one day for an 'interview.'

"I don't know whether you're aware of it, Sir, but this horse I'm riding is by Plenipotentiary."

"And who the———are you by"? responded Jonas.

That ended the conversation!

One of quite the cheeriest, and cleverest followers of Mr. Tailby's hounds, was the late Lord Rosslyn. He was also a poet of more than ordinary ability, and some verses written in 1867, about the Quorn, were generally attributed to his cynical pen. They are parodied on the well known song, 'Who can tell,' and may be unknown to some of your readers, so here they are:—

When will the Marquis come? Who can tell—
Half-past twelve, or half-past one? Who can tell—
Is he sober, is he drunk? Nipping like Myn heer von Dunk?
Will he ride, or will he funk? Who can tell?

Shall we have to wait again? Who can tell—
In the wind and in the rain? Who can tell—
While the Marquis, snug and warm, in the hall where toadies swarm,
Leaves us to the pelting storm? Who can tell?

Where'll he draw by way of lark? Who can tell—
Gartree Hill or Bradgate Park? Who can tell—
Sport regarding as a jest, which will suit his fancy best,
North or south, or east or west? Who can tell?

Where, oh where, rings Tailby's horn? Who can tell—
Why came I with this cursed Quorn? Who can tell—
Marquis, this is not a race; can you look us in the face,
And declare you like the chase? Who can tell?

As already stated, my people left Gumley for Foxton in 1861. Lord Ingestre, as he then was, became tenant of the Hall, where he resided for some four or five years, till the house was purchased by the late Captain Douglas Whitmore, from Sir William Cradock Hartopp, whose daughter he married in 1867. Captain Whitmore, who had sold his beautiful place Apley Court in Shropshire, spent thousands of pounds on Gumley Hall, and I paid many pleasant visits to him there. Lord Ingestre and his wife also showed us much hospitality. Poor Dick Clement, of the Treasury, used frequently to stay with Lord Ingestre and came out hunting with Mr. Tailby, on a black horse with a long tail, which he hired, I think, from Leicester, and which was generally believed to be utilized for hauling hearses when not let out for hunting. Poor Dick Clement was ultimately killed while hunting with the Bicester, on October 29th, 1873. He was a kind friend to me and got me more than one nomination for Civil Service Clerkships, a few years before his death. I send you rather an interesting photograph of three generations of the Shrewsbury Earls, taken in front of Gumley Hall. The one on the right is Lord Ingestre, who followed us at Gumley, and who afterwards became the 19th Earl. The mite on the pony is his son, the present and 20th Earl, the old man on the left is the grandfather, the 18th Earl, who died in 1869. It is an interesting picture, I think.

Another photograph I enclose is of three well-known followers of Mr. Tailby's hounds. Captain James Baillie, of Ilston Grange; the Rev. F. Thorp, of Burton Overy; and Captain Frank Sutton, of Carlton Hall, one of the cheeriest sportsmen and heaviest lunchers I ever met. He knew his 'Jorrocks' by heart, and Mr. Surtees, the author of that immortal novel, used frequently to stay with him. Mr. Tailby's last day as Master was celebrated at Ilston, on the 4th of April 1878, when I was staying with him at Skeffington, and he drove me to the 'Meet' in his dogcart. I wrote an article about this never-to-be-forgotten occasion in the 'Whitehall

THREE (SUCCESSIVE) EARLS OF SHREWSBURY AND TALBOT.
(taken in front of Gumley Hall.)

Review' at the time. Both Jim Baillie and Frank Sutton were intimate friends of my father; the first named presented him with a delightful arm chair, which I still possess. They have both gone, alas! to the 'great beyond,' but I am happy to say Mr. Thorp is still going strong; thus exemplifying, so far as this picture is concerned, the truth of the old saying *in medio tutissimus ibis. ! ! !*

One more illustration I enclose which you may or may not think worthy of reproduction.* 'It is a poor thing but mine own,' all except the heads, which are photographs. I perpetrated it some forty years ago. On the left are Mr. Charles Arkwright and Jack Goddard, the first man who ever compassed the stiff Welland Vale, so it was said. No cheerier huntsman or harder rider ever presided over hounds. He left Tailby for the Quorn in 1862, when Frank Goodall, whose photograph I also enclose, succeeded him as huntsman. In the forefront is the late Mr. William Hay, of Bowden Hall, one of the many who placed his home at Colonel Anstruther Thomson's disposal in the celebrated Waterloo run of February 2nd, 1866. I was myself out on that memorable day with the Pytchley, and saw the start of it, and well remember the ovation accorded to the gallant Master when he reached the Hunt Ball at Market Harborough, at 12-30 the same night. On the extreme left is my uncle (by marriage), Captain Boultbee, who hunted from Kibworth Hall from 1857 to 1861, when Mr. Hunt (number three from the left) went to reside there; and in the middle of this group is the smallest, yet greatest of them all, my valued friend Mr. William Ward Tailby.

I must now bring this long-winded effusion to a conclusion. I can only hope it may be of some little interest to those who, like myself, are *laudatores temporis acti*. Anyhow if it trenches on what you may have already placed on

* Much regret printers found picture too large to reproduce, and on a small scale the individual members of the group would have been quite indistinguishable.—F. P. DE C.

record, and of which I have as yet no knowledge, I can only say administer the blue pencil to it as freely as you think proper, and believe me, dear Mr. Costobadie, yours in all sympathy with your undertaking, and with every wish for its success.

WILLOUGHBY MAYCOCK.

The Evolution of Fox-hunting.

We do not propose to take a lengthened backward survey of the history of the 'lower-chase,' but merely to confine our observations to a glance at the gradual development of fox-hunting during the last 150 years, before which date there does not appear to be any anthentic record of hounds being solely 'entered to fox.'

Prior thereto, when Reynard was hunted, the object was to kill and kill only; unlike the deer or hare, being unfit for 'the pot,' he was only regarded as vermin.

In some parts of America, it is the custom even in the present day, to hunt on horseback, but in addition to hounds, whip and spur, followers attend armed with shot-guns! and go out with the intention of making a bag! In other States, however, where the surroundings and conditions more closely resemble those to which we are accustomed in the old world, fox-hunting is conducted on much the same lines as in the Shires, and excellent sport, with remarkably long points, obtained.

The practice and manner of conducting the hunt has undergone many changes since the days of our forefathers, whose methods more closely resembled the system of cub-hunting in vogue at the present day. Hounds would assemble at the early hour of 4 a.m., find the fox by his drag, *i.e.*, by the line he would take back to his kennel (or covert) on returning from his nightly expedition in search of food. Authorities are agreed that this offers a critical nasal test, but on occasions when the fox could hear the hounds upwind, he would have the opportunity to steal away before his pursuers could come up with him, and so much sport would be missed.

Although the woods are neither so numerous, nor anything like so large as in bygone days, a great many gorse

and other coverts have been planted within the last fifty years, and it is much easier and more certain to find a fox in covert. The rousing about he gets during cub-hunting inclines him to make for the open, and though he may call in at some other covert on his line, he will usually only take temporary shelter, and go on again. Moreover, by delaying the draw towards mid-day, the fox has had time to digest his midnight repast, and therefore is in a more fit condition to travel.

But it is not only the hours and customs of hunting that have undergone a change, the inclination to race has gradually evolved a different class of horse and type of hound.

With the introduction of more racing blood, hunters, as the veteran Mr. Tailby remarked to the writer a few weeks ago, have become more like steeple-chasers; hounds are bred more like greyhounds, and are inclined to 'gallop' rather than 'hunt' by scent. The desire for pace has relegated the old fashioned short-legged, thick set class of hunter to the walls of the painter's gallery. The horse now, and for some years past, most appreciated in the Shires, being the one that could give a good account of himself over the course at Aintree, and big enough to make even Leicestershire fences look small!

Resignation of Mr. Tailby,

and Résumé of his Mastership.

In the spring of 1878, Mr. Tailby finally, although reluctantly, decided to give up the Mastership of the Billesdon Hunt, which he had held for a period of twenty-two years. The passage quoted from his diary on page 47, —" I felt that I had done my best for the country, and they were not satisfied, so I sent in my resignation,"--may be disregarded by the reader, and might well have been eliminated altogether, but for the fact that it was obviously written under a very natural sense of irritation and despondency upon his taking a step which, although it did not sever him from his old associations, put a period to the predominate part which he had so long played, with credit and distinction. Moreover, the context clearly shows that in tendering his resignation, Mr. Tailby did not act from any feeling of resentment, or that he had any real cause to feel aggrieved, for he immediately proceeds to express his "grateful thanks to covert owners, farmers, subscribers and peasants for their support and interest, for the last twenty-two years," which he describes as "the happiest period of my career."

Truly, it may be said of him that he had striven hard to give, and had succeeded abundantly in giving, universal satisfaction, and certainly had earned a reputation for providing sport, the equal of which had never been seen, even in High Leicestershire, before.

In estimating that which Mr. Tailby accomplished during his tenure of office as Master, it should be borne in mind that he had not the advantage of inheriting, or even of acquiring, a pack of hounds with perfect organisation ready to hand, for the hounds taken over from Mr. Richard

Sutton could only be regarded as the nucleus of a kennel. Hounds had therefore to be acquired here and there, a few couples at a time, wherever a favourable opportunity presented itself. The selection of a kennel was not then the comparatively easy matter which it has become since the inauguration of Hound Shows, (the first of which took place at Redcar, Yorkshire, in 1859,) which have given such an impetus to the breeding of hounds throughout the country. However, by judicious selection and the mating of the best strains obtainable, and the indefatigable attention paid to every detail in connection with his kennel, and by equal personal care in the supervision of his stable, Mr. Tailby succeeded in triumphing, as easily as he rode, over all obstacles, and soon found himself at the head of one of the best packs and most popular hunting countries in three kingdoms.

This enviable position was only rendered possible of attainment by the hearty co-operation of owners, and occupiers of land, and by the loyal support which Mr. Tailby received, not only from subscribers to the Hunt, but from the whole countryside. Everyone seemed to appreciate his efforts, and to be imbued with his spirit of keen determination, to make a fine art of fox-hunting in the Billesdon country, and by whatever standard we may choose to gauge results, whether by the number of straight runs, long points, pace, distances covered, or last but not least important, the hunting capabilities of his hounds, it may with confidence be asserted that the sport shown—as indicated in the foregoing extracts from the Master's Journal—will bear favourable comparison with that of any other Hunt, either before or since.

Mr. Tailby purchased most of his horses from an Irish dealer, named McGrain, of Dublin, whose representative, a Mr. Brown, lived at Harborough, and to distinguish him from others who also rejoiced in that not uncommon patronymic, he was known as ' Harborough Brown.' The

number of horses kept by Mr. Tailby, for the use of the huntsman and hunt-servants, numbered about twenty-five, and he usually had a stud of about ten hunters in his own private stable. Despite being a light-weight, Mr. Tailby invariably rode big weight-carrying horses, and—although the saying is that whereas 'every mare is a horse, every horse is not a mare,' we will first mention three of his favourite mares, viz., Black Bess, Rosie, and Slouch; from the latter, Mr. Tailby bred something pretty good. Hobgoblin, Stargazer, Paddy, Cariboo, Never Despair, Brown Stout, and Jack o' Lantern, all had distinguished careers. The number of hounds in Mr. Tailby's kennels varied from between seventy to eighty couples, and the memory of the three best he ever bred—along with the horses, whose names are given above—are perpetuated upon canvas, and hang in the Hall at Skeffington.

In alluding to the late Capt. 'Bay' Middleton's acting as pilot to the Empress of Austria, I omitted to mention that on that auspicious occasion, Mr. Tailby had the honour of presenting the brush to Her Imperial Majesty.

Mr. Tailby always attributed a great measure of his success as a Master to the ability and admirable manner in which he was assisted by his huntsmen, whippers-in and the hunt-servants generally, and recalls them all with pleasure.

He describes Tom Day, who was 60 years of age when he came to Mr. Tailby, as an excellent huntsman. John Goddard, 1857—64, as a splendid man in the saddle, but a little impatient. Frank Goodall, always 'got there,' and amongst whippers-in, Dick Christian was 'one of the best.'

So fearless a rider as Mr. Tailby could not expect to escape without accidents, but he was not one to 'trouble trouble, till trouble troubled him,' and he regarded a broken collar bone as quite a minor matter. Strange to say, the most serious accident that ever befel him was not met with

in the hunting-field. It happened about eighteen years ago, when riding a four year old, on his way to look over his land at Welham. In trying to open a gate, his horse reared right over and fell upon him, breaking the bone of his left thigh. Unfortunately, the old Squire had no servant in attendance, and at the age of 70 lay where he fell, for three hours, before being discovered. This accident placed Mr. Tailby *hors de combat* for three months, when he recovered from his injury, fortunately, with no worse legacy than slight lameness. In the spring of 1872, members of the Hunt and others decided to mark their appreciation of, and gratitude to, Mr. Tailby, by presenting him with a testimonial, which took the form of a very handsome service of Gold Plate, beautifully embossed, bearing the following inscription :—

SERVICE OF GOLD PLATE.

This Goblet with other pieces of Plate
Presented to WILLIAM WARD TAILBY, ESQUIRE,
by his supporters in remembrance of the
excellent sport shown by him during
sixteen consecutive seasons as
Master of the Billesdon Hunt.
April III. MDCCCLXXII.

The testimonial was accompanied by an album bound in Morocco, containing the names of the subscribers, elegantly engrossed upon vellum, which as it includes the names of most of the original members of the Hunt, is here appended :—

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS, 1872.

Aberdour, Viscount.
Adderley, A.
Angell, B. J.
Angerstein, W.
Arkwright, A.
Arkwright, C.
Arkwright, F.
Arkwright, W. H.
Arthur, Col.
Bennett, Rev. W.
Baillie, A. H.
Baillie, C. H.
Baillie, F. D.
Baillie, J. W.
Ball, G.
Barclay, A. C.
Barclay, Capt.
Barker, Capt.
Barnard, E.
Bayley & Son.
Beardsley, A.
Behrens, H.
Behrens, J.
Bennett, B. E.
Bennett, E.
Bennett, J. E.
Berners, The Lord.
Bethune, Capt.
Bigge, T. E.
Blackwood, A.
Boultbee, Capt.
Boyce, Capt.
Braithwaite, G.
Bramley, J.
Brand, A.
Brian, F.
Brooke, R. de C.
Brown, W. H.
Bryan, T.
Bryan, Capt. J. H.
Bryan, W.
Bryan, Rev. H.
Burditt, A.
Burnaby, Col.
Bradford, The Earl of.
Calthorpe, The Lord.
Calthorpe, Hon. A.
Cardigan, Countess of.
Carington, The Lord.
Carter, M.
Castall, E.
Caswell, C.
Cheney, E.
Cholmondeley, Col. Hon. T.
Claggett, Major.
Clarke, J. W.
Clifton, Major.
Cochrane, A.
Coleman, G.
Cornell, C.
Costobadie, Rev. H.
Coventry, Hon. H.
Coventry, Capt.
Creyke, A. R.
Custance, H.
Catlin, E.
Daniel, W.
Davenport, Rev. J. C.
Davey, Miss.
Dawson, E.
Dawson, F.
Derrington, W.
Dexter, E.
Douglass, J.
Downe, Viscount.
Draycott, F.
Draycott, H.
Drummond, G.
Duncan, A.
Dabbs, A.
Elliott, J. B.
Elmhurst, Capt.
Emberlin, E.
Everett, G.
Exeter, Marquis of.
Eyre, E.
Farmer, W.
Farquhar, H.
Fenwick, C.
Fenwicke, Rev. G.
Finch, G.
Finch, H.
Fisher, E. K.
Fletcher, C. J.
Fludyer, A.
Fludyer, Capt.
Fludyer, Col.
Fludyer, Rev. H.
Forester, Hon. H.
Fowke, Sir F.
Franks, W.
Freke, Hon. W.
Freer, Major.
Gambier, W.
Gardner, The Lord.
Garrett, S.
Gascoigne, Col.
Gebhardt, H.
Gee, G.
Gee, J.
Gleadow, W.
Glover, J.
Goodman, W. J.
Gordon, F.
Gore, J.
Gosford, The Earl of.
Gosling, Capt.
Gosling, W.
Grey de Wilton, Viscount.
Grimsdick, G. J.
Gilbert, T.
Halford, Sir H.
Hall, Capt.
Hall, R.
Hardinge, Gen. Hon. A.
Harris, F.
Harrison, W.
Hartopp, E. B.
Hawes, T.
Hay, Sir R.
Hay, W.
Hazlehurst, Capt.

Hazlerigg, Sir A. G.
Heap, G. C.
Heathcote, R.
Hewett, C.
Heycock, Major.
Hoare, Sir H.
Hodges, C.
Hodges, J.
Holford, T.
Holland, C.
Hopetoun, The Earl of.
Horsepool, T.
Horsey, J.
Hubbard, J.
Hubbard, T.
Hubberstey, W. P.
Hungerford, H. H.
Hunt, R.
Hunt, W.
Heap, E.
Iliffe, W.
Inchle, J.
Ingram, W.
Jackson, J.
Jervoise, Col.
Johnson, T.
Johnson, W.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kendall, G.
Kendall, J.
Kesteven, The Lord
Kinder, H.
Lonsdale, The Earl of.
Lubbock, B.
Lubbock, N.
Marsh, T.
Maycock, Col.
Mills, J. T.
Milner, Sir W.
Mordaunt, Sir C.
Morrice, J.
Morton, The Earl of.
Mould, W.
Murrieta, A. de
Murrieta, C. de
Massey, Hon. J.
Noon, C.
Oldacre, M.
Oldacre, M. L.
Oliver, J.
Orme, J. C.
Phillips, G. W.
Pain, J.
Palmer, F.
Palmer, Sir G.
Palmer, Capt.
Parker, T.
Pawlett, J.
Payne, J.
Pearson, J.
Pearson, Capt.
Percival, T., Jun.
Percival, T.
Perkins, J.
Perkins, J., Jun.
Pennington, Hon. A.
Pennington, R.
Piercy, Rev. J.
Pochin, J.
Powell, H.
Prime, Capt.
Quintana, C. de la.
Redfern, W.
Reed, J. L.
Reynardson, Capt.
Richardson, J.
Riddell, Capt.
Rippon, W.
Robertson, Capt.
Rosslyn, The Earl of.
Rowlatt, T., Jun.
St. John, E.
Sarson, J. Jun.
Seabrooke, T.
Sedgley, W. C.
Shield, W.
Shield, J.
Shrewsbury, The Earl of.
Shoolbred, F.
Simpkin, S.
Sheffington, S.
Skinner, J.
Smith, Capt.
Smith, Rev. G. F.
Smith, J.
Smith, J. F.
Startin, H.
Stratton, G.
Studd, E.
Sutton, Capt.
Tharp, J. M.
Thorp, Rev. F.
Thursby, Mrs.
Topham, J.
Townley, C.
Tryon, Capt.
Tryon, T.
Underwood, F.
Villiers, Hon. F.
Wailes, W.
Walker, C.
Ward, B.
Ward, B. E.
Ward, F. L.
Ward, H.
Ward, R.
Ward, R. B.
Watson, G. L.
Watson, H.
Watson, J.
Watson, Capt.
Watson, T.
Watson, T. W.
Watts, W., Jun.
White,—
Whitmore, T. C. D.
Whitmore, Mrs.
Wigram, Col.
Williams, E.
Wing, W.
Wingfield, Capt.
Wombwell, Col.
Wombwell, Capt.
Wood, J.
Wood, John.

The presentation of Mr. Tailby's testimonal took place on the 3rd of April 1872, at Market Harborough, where a banquet was given at the Corn Exchange. Sir Arthur G. Hazlerigg, Bart., presided, having Mr. Tailby on his right hand, the vice-chair being occupied by Mr. John Bennett, of Husbands Bosworth, the chairman of the testimonial committee. Amongst the noblemen and gentlemen present were : the Earl of Rosslyn, the Earl of Hopetoun, Sir F. T. Fowke, Bart., Sir Geoffrey Palmer, Bart., Captain Baillie, Captain Bethune, Major Freer, Captain Tryon, Captain Whitmore, Captain Robertson, Captain Fludyer, the Rev. J. H. Fludyer, Colonel Wigram, etc. Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, in proposing the health of Mr. Taily, said they were met there as subscribers to a testimonial, the object of which was to convey to that gentleman a token of the high estimation in which he was held as a master of hounds. (Applause). He needed hardly to remind them that fifteen years ago, when that country was going, not to the dogs, for they were without dogs, Mr. Tailby came to the rescue, and had ever since shown them highly successful sport. On behalf of the 267 subscribers he had much pleasure in offering to Mr. Tailby the list of their names, and the testimonial which was in front of him. (The health of Mr. Tailby was drunk with all the honours, the applause being again and again renewed). Mr. Tailby in returning thanks, said :—'Sir Arthur Hazlerigg and gentlemen, I feel as if the hounds were running with a scent breast high, and I had not got a start, so overwhelmed am I at the situation, and so perplexed what to reply. To receive the approbation of so large a body of my brother sportsmen is to me indeed a triumph : to merit such approbation is quite another thing, for I cannot allow that the successful sport we have had, is at all due to me alone. I have been merely the means to an end ; it is rather to that cordial good fellowship, to that universal sympathy amongst all classes in everything that tends to sport, that we owe our success ; and I may venture to predict that so long as this good feeling, this mutual sympathy of all classes, prevails amongst us, so long will fox-hunting flourish in Leicestershire. (Applause). Long may it flourish gentlemen, not only as a national pastime, but as a common good ; and I contend that where there is so large a circulation of money as is of necessity involved in keeping up the large hunting establishments in this country, there must be a certain amount of good to the community. (Hear, hear). It is said to be an

era in a man's life to have made one true friend, but I cannot look round this table without feeling, and knowing that I have made many true friends, and of this I am very proud. (Applause) My sphere of action will be very much limited next season, though, thanks to the generosity and exertions of my friends, we shall have three new coverts, two in the Monday's, and one in the Thursday's country; and I am glad to take this opportunity of thanking all who have, by their exertions and means, contributed to this very desirable increase of our little country. (Applause). I say my sphere of action is limited, but all I can promise you, is this, that as long as my health and strength are vouchsafed to me, so long, no effort shall be wanting on my part, to render our sport in the future as good as it has been in the past.' (Loud Applause). Lord Rosslyn proposed the health of the committee of management, which was responded to by Mr. John Bennett. The remaining toasts were purely local.

The testimonial consists of a silver gilt Warwick vase on a stand, a pair of silver gilt four light branches, a case containing silver gilt Elizabethan pattern dessert knives, forks, spoons, ice-spoons, serving spoons, and ladles, four silver Watteau figure salt cellars, and a silver Cellini pattern claret jug and goblet to match. The value of the whole testimonial is, we understand, between 700 and 800 guineas.

Sometime previously, Mr. Tailby had been the recipient of a Silver Cup, presented to him by the keepers and earthstoppers, bearing the following inscription :—

SILVER CUP.

Presented to
WILLIAM WARD TAILBY, ESQ^RE
by the Earth Stoppers in the Billesdon Hunt
in respectful and grateful acknowledgement
of his liberality and kindness
during the time he has hunted the country.
Billesdon.
1870.

I feel that I cannot bring this brief and imperfect résumé to a more fitting conclusion than by quoting from an article, written by Mr. (now Sir) Willoughby Maycock, upon the occasion of the last 'Meet' of the Billesdon Hunt at which Mr. Tailby presided as Master, which appeared in the 'Whitehall Review' of April 13th, 1878, entitled :—

A Last Look at Tailby.

It is Thursday morning, and as we trot with a light heart on to the pretty lawn of Ilston Grange, the delightful Leicestershire home of that good sportsman Capt. James Baillie, aforetime of the Royal Horse Guards Blue, the warm April sun lights up a picture not lacking in the element of the picturesque, but, indeed, full of that colour in which Whyte Melville and Ouida revel.

His brightest rays he shed as tho' he meant
To gladden Nature but to spoil the scent.

But cheerful as the scene may be, there is a melancholy interest attaching to this meet in the favourite Leicestershire country, for to-day William Ward Tailby, who has hunted the Billesdon pack for twenty-two years, lays down his whip, and who is to succeed him is better known at Boodles than anywhere else. There is a tremendous field, for all the countryside wants to have 'a last look at Tailby,' and everybody has come to the farewell meet, either on horseback, on wheels, or on foot. Here is Sir Bache Cunard, of polo celebrity, into whose hands the country will, in all probability, go next season. He has already purchased the hounds, and if the "Quorn Question,"—far more talked of in the Shires than the "Eastern Question," and of which we shall have something to say anon—be only settled, as doubtless it will be, in his favour, this part of Leicestershire will have been fortunate in securing the services of a gentleman in all respects qualified for the onerous duties of a Master. Was it not the immortal John Jorrocks who ruled that 'an M.F.H. should have a good digestion, with a cheerful countenance, and, moreover, should know when to use the clean and when the dirty side of his tongue—when to butter a booby and when to snub a snob'? Sir Bache possesses all these attributes and many more of equal value besides. Whom have we next? Sir Arthur Hazlerigg (a name as well known

in Charles the First's time as now), as true a specimen of an English country gentleman as ever lived, and a staunch preserver of foxes to boot. Then we note the brothers William, Herbert, and Frederick Gosling—though we sadly miss 'the Colonel'—all good men and true when hounds run fast; Mr. and Mrs. Farmer, from Nonsuch, who have been hunting from Kibworth for seven years, but have now departed, it is to be feared, for good; Mr. and Mrs. Kennard, Mr. Laing, Mr. Marshall, Messrs. Watson, Redfern, Davison, Logan, and Dick Webster, of Islington renown; Mr. Hay, from Bowden, and his pretty daughter, the little lady mounted on a neat pony; Mr. W. H. Hay, as good in the hunting as in the cricket field; Mr. Willoughby Maycock, whose face was more familiar formerly than of late in these parts; Capt. Arkwright, Mr. Braithwaite, a most resolute rider, though having only one arm; Mr. and Mrs. Douglass, from Market Harborough, the former with conscious pride leading his youngest olive-branch in the way he ought to go, and many more.

Captain Baillie is unfortunately prevented by a recent accident from riding, but his doors are thrown open to all comers, and 'jumping powder' dispensed with his wonted hospitality. Mrs. Baillie, however, accompanied by her eldest daughter, is in the saddle, and so also is Mrs. Tailby. Nor is the Church without its representatives, for here, come to see the Squire's last day, are the Rev. J. Davenport, rector of Skeffington, and the Rev. F. Thorp, from Burton Overy, a sporting parson of the old school, but one who nevertheless has found it possible to combine the pleasures of the chase with the due performance of his parochial duties. There is Mrs. Thorp too, in a pony-carriage, accompanied by a chip of the old block; Colonel Arthur—who recently had the misfortune to break his leg while alighting from the train—and his wife represent the Pytchley element on wheels; and Mr. F. Underwood, on his gallant grey, and some score of others complete the field when, about a quarter after twelve, the word is given to Summers and a move is made towards Shangton Holt.

Rising a hill near the covert the long and cheery procession is joined by yet another sportsman whose well-known face we missed at the meet. 'How are you, Ship?' is the welcome that greets him on all sides. 'Got the straight tip where we were going to draw, I suppose?' says someone; nor is he far

wrong. The last arrival is Mr. Arthur Cochrane, for many years of Langton Grange, and now residing at Kibworth Harcourt, one of the oldest members and hardest riders of the hunt. Scarcely are the 'ladies' in covert before it is our ill luck to chop a vixen. But Shang-Holt has yet another 'ball of worsted' to spare, and away we go with a fair scent to Nosely (no fox ever took any other line from Shangton Holt), where there is no halt this time, thence to Stonton Wood and Cranoe where we lose him. A covert called Sheepthorn affords us a gallop towards Carlton Clump, resulting however, as before. We try it again, but without success, and a move is then made towards Rolleston, formerly the residence of the celebrated Mr. Greene, of fox-hunting renown. A find and a rattling gallop to Norton Gorse bring the day's sport to a conclusion, though unfortunately not with a kill; and then those of us who remain—for the spring day is far spent—say 'Good-bye,' with a hearty shake of the hand, to one of the best of sportsmen, best of masters, hardest of riders, and most hospitable of squires, as he turns his horse's head for home with an aching heart. Few horsemen who have sustained so many serious falls as Mr. Tailby have ever retained their nerve as he has done. But his courage has never failed him for a moment, and right well has he taught many younger men how to ride over Leicestershire during the last twenty-two years:—

O! show me the country that he cannot cross,
Be it open or wood, be it upland or moss;
Through the fog or the sunshine, the calm or the squall,
By daylight or starlight, or no light at all.

"Annals of the Billesdon Hunt."

PART II.

Sir Bache Cunard, Baronet.
Master 1878-88.

Photo by Lafayette.

Biographical Sketch of
SIR BACHE CUNARD, Baronet,
Master 1878–88.

Sir Bache Cunard, the third Baronet, of Nevill Holt, Leicestershire, was born on the 15th of May 1851, and succeeded his father, Sir Edward, in 1869; he was educated at Rugby, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, and is a Justice of the Peace and Deputy-Lieutenant for the County. Sir Bache married Maude, a daughter of the late Mr. E. F. Burke, of New York, and has a daughter, Nancy, born 1896.

Sir Bache was already well known and very popular in the hunting field and other arenas of sport, before he came forward (upon the resignation of Mr. Tailby) at the age of twenty-seven, with an offer to hunt the country.

Sir Bache's brother and heir-presumptive is Mr. Gordon Cunard, of Thorpe Lubbenham, Market Harborough, who is also a regular follower of hounds; he married in 1889 Edith Mary, daughter of the late Colonel John Stanley Howard, of Ballina Park, co. Wicklow, and has three sons, viz., Edward, born 1890; Anthony Gordon, born 1893; and Victor, born 1898. From the "Dictionary of National Biography," we learn that the first Baronet, Sir Samuel, was born in Nova Scotia in 1787. In 1838 he came to England with an introduction from Sir James Melvill, of the India House, to Robert Napier, of Glasgow, the eminent marine engineer, to whom Cunard gave an order for four steamships, each of 1,200 tons burden and 440 horse power. The project then assuming a proportion which was beyond the resources of a private individual, he joined with Mr. George Burns, of Glasgow, and Mr. David MacIver, of Liverpool, and established in 1839 The British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. The

Government, on 4th May 1839, entered into a contract with Cunard for the conveyance of the Mails between Liverpool and Halifax, Boston and Quebec, for seven years, at £60,000 per annum, stipulating at the same time that the ships should be of sufficient strength and capacity to be used as troopships in case of necessity, and to receive a fitting armament. The first voyage of this line across the Atlantic was made by the "Britannia," which in the presence of an immense concourse of spectators, left Liverpool on 4th July 1840, Cunard himself sailing in the vessel. She arrived at Boston in 14 days 8 hours, where on 22nd July Cunard was entertained at a public banquet given to celebrate the establishment of steam postal communication between America and Great Britain.

On 9th March 1859, in recognition of the services which he had rendered to the country by the establishment of the Cunard line of steamers, Her Majesty, upon the recommendation of Lord Palmerston, conferred a Baronetcy on Cunard, who was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1846.

He died at his residence, 26 Princes Gardens, Kensington, London, on 28th April 1865, when he was succeeded by his son Sir Edward, father of the present Baronet.

Nevill Holt.

The Dispute with the Quorn.

Upon the resignation of Mr. Tailby, the question that presented itself was, how and by whom the Billesdon country should be hunted in the future.

Opinion differed very considerably, and before the matter was settled a good deal of heated argument took place, both verbal and through the channels of the Press.

Whilst on the one hand certain covert owners favoured the doctrine of "in statu quo," and thought the country should revert to the Quorn,—of which they held strongly it had never ceased to form a part,—others, supported by the majority of occupiers, were equally anxious that it should retain the integral position which, they held, it had enjoyed for the last twenty-two years.

Various proposals, emanating from different sources, were put forward; owners of coverts were canvassed, meetings held, committees appointed, resolutions put, amended, withdrawn, and carried; and a voluminous correspondence,—some of a personal character much to be deprecated in the true interest of fox-hunting,—ensued, not only in the provincial newspapers, but in the principal London chronicles and sporting journals.

The dispute was ultimately submitted to the Masters of Fox Hounds' Committee of Boodles' Club, but although thirty-five years have elapsed, and the matter has become ancient history, there are some old residents who are inclined to think that, as the Award did not give entire satisfaction (what award ever did?), the dispute may crop up again for solution at some future time. Should these prophets predict correctly, readers may be glad to be in possession of the full facts as put forward at the period of which we write (to which they may not have ready access), which the kindness of Sir Bache Cunard, in placing all the records at my disposal, enables me to furnish.

I therefore propose, as far as space will allow, to make an impartial selection from them, leaving readers to judge as to the merits, or otherwise, of the various arguments made use of by the respective parties, and to form their own judgment of the opinions therein expressed.

In March and April 1878, the following appeared in London and local newspapers:—

> The resignation of that venerable Nimrod, Mr. Tailby, from the Mastership of the hounds of the Billesdon Hunt, has led to a serious complication in Leicestershire, which is the very stronghold of English fox-hunting. It appears that the Billesdon country once formed part of the Quorn country as it existed previous to 1852, and now on Mr. Tailby's retirement the Mastership has been offered to Sir Bache Cunard (well known among us as the eldest son of the late Sir Edward Cunard), backed by a requisition in his favour signed by the occupiers and owners of more than 60,000 acres of land. But the Quorn master now wishes to invade the Billesdon country, and the landowners who did not sign the requisition are 'torn by conflicting emotions.'
>
> Meanwhile, a proposition has been made to refer the whole matter to a committee of Boodles' Club, which does not seem to meet with universal favour. It is a little hard on Sir Bache, who is a plucky rider and will make a first-rate M.F.H.

March 23rd, 1878.

> Just now there is a very pretty hunting squabble going on in Leicestershire anent the Quorn. If Mr. Coupland, Lord Castlereagh, and Sir Henry Halford continue their present opposition, matters will end by there being no hunting at all, as the farmers are determined not to let Mr. Tailby's district be annexed to the Quorn. They threaten in such event to kill all the foxes and wire all the fences. This would be a deathblow to Market Harborough, and therefore all lovers of sport should sink their grievances and support Sir Bache Cunard.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LEICESTER JOURNAL.

> Sir,—I am requested by the Hunt Committee emphatically to deny the truth of a statement, which has appeared in several papers, to the effect that the majority of the landowners and

covert owners in the Billesdon country are in favour of that country being hunted by the Quorn.

The Committee beg of me to add that they are utterly unaware of the existence of any want of unanimity between landowners and occupiers in the Billesdon country.

Yours obediently,

Ilston Grange, Leicester.
April 23rd, 1878.

A. H. Baillie,
Hon. Sec.

Extracts from the Case on Behalf of the Billesdon Hunt, as summarised by the Committee specially appointed, and ultimately submitted to the Masters of Fox Hounds' Committee of Boodles' Club :—

The conditions upon which Mr. Tailby accepted the Billesdon country (as far as the Quorn and Lord Stamford are concerned), appear in the following letters addressed to the "Leicester Journal," (April 12th, 1878) :—

From the Earl of Stamford and Warrington,

30th March, 1878.

When I took the hounds it was with the distinct understanding that I could hunt the whole Quorn country, viz :—the part hunted by Mr. Tailby, at any time I wished, by, of course, giving him proper notice. That part of the country was originally comprised in the Old Quorn Hunt, and has for time immemorial belonged to it.

The same remark (time immemorial) applies to the greater part of the Atherstone, and much of what is now called the 'Meynell country,' both of which belonged at no very distant time to the Quorn.

Mr. Tailby wrote to the "Leicester Journal," in reply, as follows :—

THE BILLESDON COUNTRY.

Sir,—In reply to a quotation from a letter from Lord Stamford, which has appeared in most of the sporting papers : *I most distinctly deny* that any portion of the Quorn country was ever lent to me, and *I challenge* any member of the Quorn committee, or any other individual, to prove that I ever accepted the Billesdon country on the condition of a loan.

That district having been rejected by the Quorn in 1856,

became a Derelict, which was picked up by me; and with the consent of the covert owners, land owners, and land occupiers, was established as a *distinct country, with no conditions whatever.* Lord Stamford's letter states:—

'When I took the hounds it was with the distinct understanding that I could hunt the whole Quorn country, viz:—the part hunted by Mr. Tailby, at any time I wished, by, of course, giving him proper notice. My only reason for not hunting it was, that at the time it appeared the wish of the residents and those hunting on that side that Mr. Tailby should have it, and I had no wish to disturb him, having all Donnington country, as well as the principal of the Quorn.'

The inference to be drawn from this statement is, that at the time when Lord Stamford came forward I had already taken the Billesdon country, and it is evident he is labouring under an error when he makes this assertion, as I did not come forward to hunt that country until a considerable time after Lord Stamford had declined to do so. My first advertised meet was November 24th, 1856.

Yours obediently,

W. W. Tailby.

Skeffington Hall, Leicester, April 16th, 1878.

No answer to Mr. Tailby's letter has been published in any local, or (as far as we are aware), in any other paper, and the statements therein made can be abundantly confirmed. An intimation was given by Lord Stamford in 1859, that he was prepared to hunt the Billesdon side at the desire of the owners of coverts, etc., but the proposal was at once declined. Letters objecting to the proposal from the late Mr. Greene, of Rolleston, (an ex-master of the Quorn,) in themselves we venture to assert are a proof of Lord Stamford having severed the two countries for ever.

49, Upper Baker Street, Regent's Park,

London, February, 23rd, 1859.

My Dear Tailby,—I was very much astonished at the information contained in your letter, which I received yesterday. I cannot understand how Lord Stamford, after having refused the most pressing requests to hunt the whole country, should now (*un-asked*) ask for it. After you have gone to considerable expense and trouble, built kennels, got together a good pack of hounds, and the whole thing giving satisfaction. I

am perfectly satisfied with the present arrangement, and as far as I can see the matter at present, will not consent to any change: my opinion is that the country will and ought to support you; the only fear I see is, lest any of the Melton or Leicester subscribers should take advantage of Lord Stamford's offer to save their pockets. I don't think it a very courteous proceeding towards you.

Yours very truly,

HENRY GREENE.

London, February 24th, 1859.

DEAR TAILBY,—Holding the situation as I do as one of the Stewards of Boodles' Fox-hunting Committee, to whom disputes on Fox-hunting law are referred: I wish to guard myself against giving a premature opinion, and beg you will consider my letter of yesterday as merely conveying my private individual satisfaction with the present arrangement, and my approbation of the manner in which you hunt the country. If you should have occasion to mention my opinion in the matter, I should be obliged if you would confine it to this interpretation.

Yours truly,

HENRY GREENE.

In November, 1871, Mr. Tailby having announced his intention to retire at the end of the season; a meeting of the members of the Quorn hunt (convened by letter), was held at the Bell Hotel, Leicester. The Earl of Wilton in the chair.

After a considerable discussion, during which Sir Arthur Hazlerigg said:—

'This meeting seems to ignore what was done by the gentlemen on the Harborough side. For fifteen years they were left entirely in the lurch, and to their own resources to hunt the country; the covert owners, therefore, feel that they are now quite free to choose their own master; and at a recent meeting they were almost unanimous on the subject.'

Lord Grey de Wilton observing that there appeared to be considerable difference of opinion on the subject, moved, and Col. Burnaby seconded,

'That the question be submitted to the committee, at Boodles, and that Mr. Tailby be written to requesting him to appoint a committee to represent his views.'

This was unanimously agreed to by the meeting, and a committee of five was appointed which simply made a protest.

At the earnest request of the Billesdon country Mr. Tailby recalled his resignation, and this may possibly be the reason why the committee carried the matter no further—but let the cause have been that, or other, Mr. Tailby remained *undisturbed* in the Billesdon country, with the full approbation of the owners and occupiers, till the end of the season 1877-8. Twenty-two years.

It seems difficult to contend, that the appointment of a committee, by the members of the Quorn hunt, at a meeting to which the Billesdon hunt (*existing de facto*) were not invited, can disturb the possession of twenty years, but as it is reported, that such is the contention of Mr. Coupland, aud such the fact alone relied on, it is important that the committee should have their attention called thereto.

It is also to be remarked, that at the meeting, the independence of the Billesdon country was distinctly asserted, and that at a meeting of the Billesdon hunt—shortly before called together at Wistow—it was determined by a very large majority (if not almost unanimously) that the Billesdon is, and shall continue to be independent.

Mr. Tailby having announced his determination to retire at the end of last season, a meeting of covert owners was held at Wistow, in February 1878, where it was agreed to invite *all owners and occupiers of land, subscribers, and others interested* in the management of the hunt, to meet at Kibworth, on Wednesday, February 27th, Sir Henry Halford to take the chair.

The meeting was held accordingly, and there was a large attendance. The chairman stated that he had received two propositions, which he should put before them for the future hunting of the country, one from Mr. Coupland, and another from Sir Bache Cunard.

> 'The course most practicable would be to thoroughly discuss and hear the opinions of every one there that day as to what should be done, and then a committee should be appointed, to consider what they had heard, and other evidence, and take such steps as they thought necessary, for the future management of the hunting of the country.'
>
> Mr. Coupland proposed (during the hunting season) 'to give up to Lord Ferrers a considerable portion on the north side of the country.'

The letters were as follows :—

Goscote Hall, Leicester,
February 26th, 1878.

'Dear Sir Henry,—I don't know that I can say anything more than repeat my former proposal to hunt the country, which Mr. Tailby has resigned—two days a week—provided it is the *general wish* that the old Quorn should be united. My intention is to give up my present kennels at Quorn, which are tumbling down, and remove the establishment to some central spot where justice can be done to all sides of what will then be the Quorn country. My idea of a central situation would be Thurnby, Scraptoft, Beeby, etc., not too far from a railway station. If I hunt this country, I should take all sides in their turn, and make no difference with Holt, Allexton, and Theddingworth than any other. With regard to the matters of detail, I shall be glad to consult those who take an interest in the hunt. I shall study the interests of the landed proprietors, farmers, and members of the hunt, and do my best to show sport to all.'

I remain,
Yours truly,
J. Coupland.

Hallaton Hall, Uppingham.
February 27th, 1878.

'Dear Sir Henry,—Should it be the general wish of Mr. Tailby's hunt to keep the country in its present integrity; in case no one comes forward I will hunt the country, with a subscription, on the same terms that Mr. Tailby does, viz ;—five days a fortnight, find hounds, kennels, etc. I make this proposition to the country entirely on the understanding that I shall be supported in my best endeavours to show sport.'

I remain, yours sincerely,
B. Cunard.

After much discussion, the motion that 'Sir Bache Cunard's offer be accepted' was withdrawn, and a committee of 17 unanimously appointed to consider what should be done. *Their decision to be final and conclusive.*

The committee met next day, February 28th, at Ilston Grange. Fourteen members were present, and the offer of Sir Bache Cunard

was accepted, by a majority of 11 to 3; this majority was further increased by a telegram from one member and covert owner, who was unable to attend; and the chairman, Sir Henry Halford, was requested to announce the decision to Mr. Coupland, with the thanks of the committee for his offer. Upon the decision of the committee being intimated to Sir Bache Cunard, he considered the matter as settled; bought Mr. Tailby's hounds, built kennels, and made the necessary arrangements for hunting the country.

The power of the committee to decide finally being disputed, a long correspondence ensued, Sir Bache Cunard leaving himself unreservedly in the hands of the Billesdon hunt committee. The opinion of the committee of Boodles is requested on the case, and by which opinion the Billesdon hunt committee agree to be bound: though they still contend that the decision of the committee (appointed as above) was intended at the meeting to be final and conclusive.

It is much to be regretted that permission has been refused to see the case submitted to your committee by Mr. Coupland, as the grounds upon which it claims, and the facts by which such claims are supported, can only be matters of conjecture gathered from conversation and letters (public and private). A knowledge of the actual case would have enabled this question to have been put more shortly and clearly before your committee; and, it is hoped, that should there be facts in dispute, or arguments unanswered, your committee will apply to both parties for information. The decision in the case will be so important a precedent, that we trust this request needs no excuse.

It was arranged that Sir Bache Cunard should hunt the Billesdon country during the season 1878-9, without prejudice to the rights of either party.

We submit that the Billesdon country is independent and free to choose its own master, according to fox-hunting law; because (1) the Earl of Stamford and Warrington—with the assent of the Quorn hunt—declined to hunt the country south of the Uppingham Road in 1856; and, after his refusal, Mr. Tailby hunted the same without interruption for twenty-two years (1856-1878).

We submit that the following cases lay down clearly the principle of twenty years' possession, of which (amongst other grounds) we contend.

Here follow citation of a number of awards by Committee of Boodles for which we are unable to find space.

At the meeting of 1878 Mr. Coupland made no claim on behalf of the Quorn, and proposed to hunt the country 'provided only it be the general wish,' etc.; and we contend that as he left the whole question to the meeting, he must be held bound by the decision of the committee appointed by that meeting, and cannot re-open the question.

None of the several masters who succeeded Lord Stamford have at their accession claimed the Billesdon side, nor have the members of the Billesdon hunt ever been consulted in any of the changes of the Quorn hunt since 1856.

We have endeavoured to put the case fairly before your committee; we are prepared to produce all documents referred to, and to support with evidence every statement made, having every confidence in your judgment and anxiety to promote the prosperity of fox-hunting. We trust that you will be able to declare that country independent, which, deserted by the Quorn, Mr. Tailby has made famous for the last twenty-two years; and which by a large majority of owners, and the unanimous vote of occupiers, has chosen a worthy successor in Sir Bache Cunard.

(*Signed*),

A. G. Hazlerigg.	John Richardson.
George L. Watson.	J. T. Pawlett.
James W. Baillie.	Francis Underwood.
W. W. Tailby.	J. E. Bennett.
William C. Gosling.	J. Grimsdick.
George Vere Braithwaite.	J. Perkins.

The Case on Behalf of the Quorn.

This country includes the main portion, hunted four days a week by Mr. Coupland—the Donnington side, hunted two days a week by Lord Ferrers (instead of one as recently, prior to Mr. Coupland so lending it)—and the Billesdon side, hunted by Mr. Tailby five days a fortnight.

A hundred and twenty years ago the country extended over that part of the present Atherstone, around Bosworth, Enderby, Whetstone, Kirby, and Ravenstone. It also comprises a part

of the present Meynell country around Keddlestone, and Shirley, kenneling at Bradley for the purpose; but having its permanent head-quarters at Quorndon and Little Bowden.

Such was the extent that Mr. Meynell hunted for forty-seven seasons.

The precise date when the western outskirts were given up, is not on record. Lord Vernon was the first recognised Atherstone master, and was succeeded in 1819 by Lord Lichfield, who kept the hounds at Witherley, near Atherstone.

To return to the Quorn, Mr. Meynell was in 1800 succeeded by Lord Sefton for five seasons (who was the first to introduce second horses). Then in succession followed Lord Foley for two seasons. Mr. Assheton Smith, who was first to hunt his own hounds, then had it for ten seasons, Mr. Osbaldiston for another ten (one and a half seasons of which, however, were hunted by Sir Bellingham Graham). Lord Southampton then succeeded for three seasons; Sir Harry Goodrich for two; and for another two, Mr. Francis Holyoake—who in 1833-4 was induced by the Marquis of Hastings to permit him to hunt the Donnington side (which continued to be separately hunted for seventeen or eighteen seasons, until reclaimed by Sir Richard Sutton). Mr. Holyoake was followed by Mr. Rowland Errington for three seasons. Then Lord Suffield for one (who built the Billesdon kennels in 1838). Mr. Hodgson for two, under whose mastership Mr. Assheton Smith brought his hounds for a day to Rolleston—which is one of the largest meets on record. A committee, with Mr. Greene in the saddle and with the horn, then managed affairs for six seasons, until Sir Richard Sutton gave up the Cottesmore.

Then it was, that in 1847, Sir Richard took the Quorn. In 1851 the Donnington side becoming vacant, he reclaimed it; and two years later, in 1853, confided the Billesdon side to his son Dick, who hunted this *part of the Quorn* for his father.

Sir Richard died in November, 1855, and during that season, 1855-6, the Quorn country was hunted by his two sons (the present Sir Richard and Captain Frank Sutton) and his son-in-law (Mr. Clowes).

Prior to a candidate coming forward to hunt the country in its *entirety*, Lord Stamford made an offer to hunt the same *part* that the late Sir Richard Sutton had latterly hunted *himself*.

The proposal was duly considered at a hunt meeting of the whole Quorn country at Leicester, and, as Lord Stamford required no subscriptions, it was deemed advantageous, and accepted; it being decided, during the continuance of Lord Stamford's tenure, to hunt the Billesdon side (*i.e.* south of Leicester and Uppingham Road) by subscription.

And here it is that it may be well emphatically to record, that neither Lord Stamford nor the hunt meeting at Leicester, composed as it was of land owners permanently interested in the fox-hunting welfare of the Quorn country, and mindful of its glorious traditions, for an instant intended that *temporary* arrangement to for ever sever the Billesdon side from the main body of the country. It is true some time elapsed before Mr. Tailby offered to hunt it with a subscription, and by some the acceptance of Lord Stamford's liberal offer is called an 'abandonment' of the Billesdon side.

Lord Stamford was succeeded, after seven seasons, by Mr. Clowes for three; the Marquis of Hastings for two; Mr. Musters for two likewise, until 1870, when Mr. Coupland became master.

Upon these several occasions, Mr. Tailby being desirous to continue to hunt the Billesdon side, common courtesy prevented that side being reclaimed to its *own*; and there was, moreover, another reason for not disturbing the arrangement—namely, that a part of the Cottesmore country and Cottesmore *woodlands* had been provisionally added to the Billesdon side, which it was considered advisable not to interfere with.

Mr. Tailby having hunted these portions of the Quorn and Cottesmore for sixteen seasons, wrote on the 19th of June 1871, to Mr. Coupland to say, 'it is my intention to give up the country I now hunt at the end of next season, but I have not as yet given the landowners formal notice of such intention.'

What then happened, six years ago, may, as matters now stand, be interesting to record. Mr. Craven offered to hunt the Billesdon side two days a week, but retracted that offer.

So did subsequently the Marquis of Queensberry, who, in writing to the Press to do so says:—

'Will you allow me to correct the statements which appeared in "The Field" last week, with reference to my having declined, on account of the small prospect of sport, to hunt

that part of Mr. Tailby's country which Mr. Coupland has claimed for the Quorn? I had not then declined it, although I had offered to do so, but on the contrary, at the suggestions of what I was led to believe was the wish of the people in that part of the country, and being in ignorance of how matters really stood, I applied to the covert and land owners for the purpose of proposing myself as a person willing to undertake to hunt this country, being under the impression that it was to all intents and purposes vacant.

'I now find it is not vacant, and therefore I withdraw at once as it would be absurd for me to apply for a country which is already claimed as belonging to another hunt.

'I take this opportunity of giving notice to the land and covert owners to whom I have applied that I do now withdraw, and of stating that it was never my intention when applying to them to start such a radical theory, and one that would be so entirely against the conservative laws of fox-hunting, as the idea that they, the land and covert owners, could establish a pack in a country which already belonged to another hunt.

'If there are any who are of opinion that the country does not belong to the Quorn, the matter can be easily decided by referring to the fox-hunting committee at Boodles. If decided in their favour they may then do as they like themselves with their own country. May I be allowed to say, as a looker-on, and a sincere well wisher of peace and unity in all hunting countries, that under the last named circumstance it would be a matter of courtesy to give Mr. Coupland the first offer of it.'

Such was the Marquis of Queensberry's view of the situation.

What happened was as follows: A meeting was convened for the 30th of November 1871, at Leicester, of all the principal landed proprietors of the entire 'Quorn Country,' to take its future into consideration.

The Leicester meeting proposed that the question should be referred to the committee of masters of fox hounds at Boodles.

In the meantime, however, a meeting had been held at Wistow, in the Billesdon side, at which it had been decided that the coverts of that side remain at the disposal of Mr. Tailby, who had consented to *continue* to hunt that side and draw them, and so the question was left in abeyance.

But the limits of the country Mr. Tailby had been hunting became curtailed. Col. Lowther, the then master of the Cottesmore, claimed the portion of that country and its *woodlands*, and so deprived it of an essential requisite.

Six seasons have elapsed since then, and Mr. Tailby has now definitely determined to give up his hounds.

What has recently ensued (as appears in the Leicester newspapers) is that Sir Henry Halford is therein reported to have stated, as chairman of a Meeting at Kibworth on the 27th of February, that 'of the *twenty-seven* owners of coverts *fifteen* had written to say they would prefer Mr. Coupland to hunt the country, *three* had expressed a wish for the country to be kept distinct, and the others had given *no opinion at all*.' Considerable discussion and disorder is reported to have arisen at this meeting, the result of which was to appoint a committee of land owners and occupiers, seventeen in all, for the next day at Ilston.

The newspaper reports that fifteen attended the Ilston meeting, when there was, it is believed, a majority (so it is reported) of seven in favour of the Billesdon side continuing to be separately hunted.

Whether the procedure of convening such a committee—whether it was a precedent to be followed—or whether it was representative of the interests of the principles at stake, were matters of conversation in fox-hunting circles.

On the 2nd of March, Sir Bache Cunard wrote to the covert owners of the Billesdon side to say:—

'At a General Meeting of the Billesdon Hunt, at Kibworth, on February 27th, I was asked to take the hounds, to which I have agreed. May I have your permission to draw your coverts in future?'

Thereupon Mr. Coupland wrote to Sir Bache Cunard in the following terms (March 9th):—'I find some of the covert owners in both North and South Leicestershire think that in the interests of fox-hunting the matter of Tailby's country should be referred to the committee at 'Boodles.' It is very different your starting a separate country to Tailby, who had it so many years, and when all the covert owners wished him to continue; but, as matters now stand, the majority of covert owners in Tailby's country have written accepting my proposal

to hunt that country. It is therefore my duty to give you notice that, with the sanction of the covert owners, the case on behalf of 'The Quorn' will be sent to Boodle's Committee.'

Mr. Coupland in suggesting 'a reference' to the recognised fox-hunting committee of Boodles, was actuated by a feeling of his being, as it were, trustee for the time, of the interests of the Quorn country, and that it is him that it behoves, to urge what is the country's time-honoured cause. It therefore behoves none to take umbrage at his suggestion.

On 24th June 1879, Lord Spencer wrote to Sir Bache Cunard as follows :—

24th June 1879.

My Dear Sir Bache,

I send you a copy of a Round Robin which has been signed by forty masters and ex-masters of fox hounds, and is addressed to Mr. Coupland.

The original is in the hands of the Secretary of the Hunt Servants Society at Tattersall's.

Yours truly,

Spencer.

The Award of the Committee of Masters of Fox Hounds.

We, the undersigned Masters and ex-Masters of fox hounds, being of opinion that much injury will be done to the cause of fox-hunting all over the United Kingdom, by the unfortunate dispute in the Quorn country :—

Being most anxious to bring matters to an amicable conclusion, and having fully considered both sides of the question :—

We venture to suggest that Mr. Coupland, the master of the Quorn, having established his absolute right to that portion of the Quorn country, formerly hunted by Mr. Tailby, should not insist on resuming it at present, and should agree to permit Sir Bache Cunard to continue to hunt that portion of the country, on the understanding that it reverts to the Quorn, and that the land owners should use their best endeavours to assist Mr.

Coupland, or any future master of the Quorn on the retirement of Sir Bache Cunard.

Signatories :—

Robert Arkwright,
T. Harvey D. Bayly,
Albert Brassey,
Carington,
F. Chaplin,
T. W. Clowes,
P. C. M. Carnegie,
Rich. H. Combe,
Coventry,
J. J. Drake,
Charles A. Egerton,
Francis T. Savile Foljambe,
G. Lane Fox,
George Fenwick,
Fitzhardinge,
Galway,
Richard G. Glyn,
Hardwicke,
C. A. R. Hoare,
Leconfield,
Macclesfield,
H. H. Turner Nevinson,
William G. Oakeley,
Poltimore,
W. H. B. Portman,
Radnor,
John Russell,
J. Slingsby,
Francis Sutton,
Spencer,
Francis Scott,
J. Anstruther Thomson,
Tredegar,
Villebois,
Worcester,
Waterford,
W. Wynn,
Willoughby de Broke,
Wrottesley,
Zetland.

The dispute was thus amicably settled. The Billesdon country was acknowledged to be part of the Quorn district. Sir Bache Cunard was allowed to continue to hunt it without limit as to time, the Billesdon hounds being known as Sir Bache Cunard's hounds.

NEVILL HOLT,
June 29th, 1913.

DEAR MR. COSTOBADIE,

YOU asked me to give you some information and accounts of good runs during my mastership of this country, 1878—88, and I have picked out from my diary a few which I think may be of interest . . . They are only a Master's jotting down, in his diary, generally written after coming in from hunting. I have taken a few days from each season, and for the sake of brevity, I have cut out the proceedings of the day that were of no particular interest.

1878-79. Richard Summers, huntsman; W. Sheppard, 1st whip.

February 27th. Met at Cranoe, and after two short runs in the morning, found at Hardwicks, ran through Noseley to Stonton Wood, running fast straight through the wood. Ran on leaving Glooston to the left past Othorpe House, Hallaton Manor to Slawston, out again and killed in the open.

March 3rd. Met at Foxton; Gumley Wood, Holywell Planting and Gumley Gorse, all blank. Found in Bosworth Gorse and ran fast towards Bosworth Village, round to the canal, under Theddingworth, along Marston Hills to Alford Thorns, then to Fisher's House, Hill Crest, turned back over the railway to Farndon, by Oxenden to Kelmarsh, and lost.

1879–80.

January 12th. Met at Marston. Found in Marston Hills, ran to Alford Thorns and back to Coombes, leaving Sibbertoft to right, by Naseby Woolleys on to Gee's house near Hemplows, and lost. Found again in Bosworth Gorse and ran as if for Walton Holt; but turned under Bosworth Village and on close to Kilworth Sticks—not touching it—ran on towards Caldecott Spinney, and on by Kimcote to Gilmorton; fox dead beat in village but got in somewhere and was lost.

The Master's graphic description of the memorable run to ground of the bob-tailed vixen of Noseley.

February 5th. Met at Rolleston. Found at Crow Spinney the bob-tail vixen of Noseley. She came away just in front of me, raced through Coney Hill and Noseley up to Stonton Wood, on through Glooston and by Hallaton Village to Blaston, on nearly to Medbourne, turning towards Slawston. She went to

A Good Beginning to the Season.

ground in a culvert under the railway between Slawston covert and Weston, just where the bridle road from Medbourne to Welham and Cranoe, goes under the railway. Time 1 hour 15 minutes.

I put one of the kennel terriers to ground and it never appeared again. The first whip, Sheppard, after hunting, stayed all night trying to get the terrier out, and the following morning his kennel boy went to ground 25 yards with a rope tied to his legs and a dark lantern, and found water. The weight of the embankment had caused the culvert to sink in the middle; with a pole he recovered the body of the fox, but the terrier was never found.

I had this fox's body stuffed and mounted in a case and presented it to Sir Arthur Hazlerigg, and it was in the Hall at Noseley for many years. This vixen was known to have had 11 litters.

February 20th. Met at Thorpe Langton; bye-day. Found in Langton Caudle and raced through Stonton Wood to Hardwicks and lost; 16 minutes. Found again in Shangton Holt, ran towards Ilston Village, back by Rolleston, through Keythorpe Park, nearly to East Norton; past Vowe's Gorse to Horninghold and killed near Alexton in the open; 1 hour 5 minutes.

March 13th. Met at Hallaton. Found outlier near village, ran past Othorpe by Glooston through Keythorpe Wood, past the house to Tugby Bushes, and on to Browne's Bushes; holloaed on to a fresh fox and lost; 45 minutes. Found again in Stockerston and raced through Merevale Holt by Great Eastern to Rockingham Woods and through park to ground near park wall at Middleton.

1880–81. William Grant, from Lord Macclesfield, huntsman; afterwards with Lord Middleton (1888). Tom Newman, 1st whip; afterwards huntsman to Cambridgeshire.

December 20th. Met at Mowsley. Found at Walton Holt, raced past Kilworth Sticks nearly to South Kilworth; ran back close by Walton Holt, through Kilworth Sticks and lost. Thick fog; kept losing hounds; 50 minutes. Found in Bosworth Gorse and ran well past Walton Holt, Walton Village; leaving Kimcote and Gilmorton well to the left to Peatling covert, and on to Ashby and lost; 45 minutes.

Digging Out by Aid of Lanterns.

December 26th. Met at Lubbenham, found on Marston Hills, raced across Bosworth Park, by village to Bosworth Gorse and hunted well by Mr. Mills' house ; back past Kilworth Sticks, by Kilworth House, nearly to Stanford Hall, and killed in South Kilworth village. After drawing Walton Holt blank, found in Laughton Hills, and ran fast past Gumley to Laughton village, where fox lay down ; ran back by Laughton Hills, to ground in drain at Glover's farm. Decided to get him out. The men put their horses in the stable, and were digging by the aid of lanterns. The fox bolted between the second whip's legs, and disappeared, with the hounds, into darkness. After the men had got their horses they found the hounds half-a-mile off, having killed their fox.

A Remarkable Coincidence.

December 29th. Met at Goadby. Found in big field at Rolleston, and ran fast by Ashlands, to ground at Billesdon, bolted him, and ran to ground again near Coplow, hounds drew him and killed. Found again at Rolleston, and ran same line again and lost, a field from Coplow. Found again at Keythorpe, ran to Rolleston, and exactly same line as twice before, and lost in same place. *A curious day.*

Archer, the celebrated jockey, "left" ; 30 minutes "as fast as hounds or horses could go."

1881.

February 9th. Met at Little Stretton, drew Stoughton, Thurnby Spinney, Norton Gorse, Galby Spinnies, Shangton Holt, Hardwicks and Noseley blank ; found at three o'clock at Rolleston, and *raced* straight by Billesdon cemetery nearly to Tilton village and round into Tilton Wood ; 30 minutes, as fast as hounds or horses could go. Changed out by Tilton and round through Skeffington Wood to Loddington Redditch, and stopped hounds. A very hot summer-like day ; horses standing completely blown in every field near Tilton. Fred Archer, riding a weight-carrier of Duke of Portland's, among the number.

"Running hard" for 4 hours 10 minutes.

1882.

January 8th. Met at Husbands Bosworth ; found in Walton Holt, ran well nearly to Laughton Hills, turned as if for Bosworth

Gorse, passing it, ran to Theddingworth and on to Galby, where fox waited for us, and ran back, leaving Bosworth Gorse to right, past Walton Holt to Walton and Gilmorton villages, and on to Bitteswell, where we changed and ran on by Ullesthorpe station and round to Cotesbach, where he got to ground. Running hard 4 hours 10 minutes. Brought hounds home by train from Rugby.

The best day's sport the Master ever had, and the largest fox he ever saw.

1883–84.

November 29th. Met at Stonton; found in Stonton Wood and raced towards Noseley, turned to right along brook side, past Rolleston to Skeffington, turned left just short of Skeffington Wood, and hunted well past Tilton to John o' Gaunt, out to Markfield on a stale line and stopped hounds. Found again in Rolleston—the biggest fox I ever saw,—and ran fast, leaving Billesdon to the right, nearly to the coplow, where he was headed; I saw him coming back from the coplow in the next field as we were going towards it over the Leicester Road, leaving Billesdon on the left, towards Frisby, bearing right to Houghton and on to Ingarsby, back under Quenby, along the spinney by railway, by Lord Morton's Gorse, over the hill towards Skeffington, where he jumped up on to a hay stack, where a truss had been cut out; one hound winded him and turned him off, and killed in the middle of a ploughed field between Tilton and Skeffington. I always consider this the best day's sport I ever saw.

Another fine run of 2 hours 23 minutes.

December 17th. Met at Husbands Bosworth; found at Bosworth Gorse, and ran at fair pace past Walton Holt, through Kilworth Sticks, by Kilworth House, through Caldecot Spinney, round Walcot, past Shawell Wood to Swinford, and on to Stanford Hall, and raced to Lilbourne station, and killed on railway bank. 2 hours 23 minutes.

Junction with Lord Lonsdale's hounds.

February 2nd. Met at Nevill Holt; found in Watson's Gorse and ran fast by Drayton, along river—a most unusual line—between Rockingham station and village, where Lord Lonsdale's hounds joined in, crossed road and ran on up the valley towards Gretton, back by cow pastures, and killed in pond near Rockingham lodge.

Hounds run through Railway Station Waiting Room.

March 7th. Met at Bowden Junction; found in Sheepthorns and raced by Carlton, bearing to left, and back to Kibworth, by the mill to Langton Hall and East Langton, hunted on through Thorpe Langton, past Langton Caudle to Slawston, over the railway and back to ground near the covert, bolted him and raced by Slawston village, towards Hallaton Manor, over railway to right, *through the waiting room* at Hallaton station, on nearly to Horninghold, and back to the railway and killed.

Very Fast 45 Minutes.

March 10th. Met at Fleckney; got on line of a travelling fox in lane near Whetstone and raced through Peatling, on past Arnesby to Shearsby, leaving it to left, on to Fleckney, on past Saddington, leaving it to right, also to right left Saddington Gorse and Gumley, over canal between Debdale and Foxton, and again crossed canal to Bowden Toll-bar, past Fisher's house to Lubbenham, to ground in spinney at Thorpe Lubbenham. First 45 minutes very fast. 1 hour 45 minutes.

Three Couples of Hounds Injured by Nails on top of Orchard Fence.

1884.

February 23rd. Met at Kilby; found in Peatling and hunted well past Arnesby and Shearsby to Knaptoft and John Ball, away at once, and ran fast past Mowsley, straight to Bosworth Gorse, not entering, ran on to Bosworth village and killed in Mr. Gebhardt's orchard; 1 hour 20 minutes. Three couples of hounds badly torn by nails on top of fence round orchard when running in view, put there "to tear the damn boys' breeches, when they come to steal the apples, eh!"

Remarkably Good Run—eleven-mile point—into the Atherstone Country.

1886.

December 13th. Met at Shearsby; found at Peatling, ran by Ashby old covert field (covert having been done away with), down to Willoughby brook, straight on leaving Willoughby on the right and Ashby Magna on the left, over the allotments and over the Lutterworth and Leicester Turnpike, and bearing slightly to the right, leaving Cosby hill on the right and Dunton Bassett just on the left, straight along the meadows to Broughton Astley station, passing to the left of it about two hundred yards,

and by Mr. A. Arkwright's house, leaving it and Broughton Astley village close on the right hand, over the Broughton brook fast, near which, on crossing the railway, I saw him only a field in front going strong; went straight on to the Frolesworth Road, leaving Leire on the left, also the main earths on Frolesworth hill and turned a bit to the right, past Sutton lodge, leaving it on the right, down the meadows to near Soar mill, and into the old Fosse Road, close to the river Soar; he then kept right on up the Fosse and Soar Valley, leaving Shapcote spire and Sharnford just on the right and Frolesworth on the left, and crossed the Claybrook branch of the Soar just to the east of the Fosse Road bridge, between Sharnford and Frolesworth, and went past Stoney Hole's farm, leaving the Shade Gorse three fields to the right and going right up to Claybrook village, then going by Mr. Beale's house, turned to the right up the hill over High Cross and straight on to the left of High Cross, over the Watling Street Road to Wibtoft in Warwickshire, and bearing to the right he kept on over the Fosse Road near Copston Gorse, went through Toone's Spinnies, and then (either the same or another fox) went on to the left of Little Copston, and by Copston Lodge as if for Three Pots Spinnies, but Mr. Cox's men headed him and he turned to the left over Wolvey heath, and circling round leftwards went nearly to Cloudsley Bush farm, where he again turned left and got into Copston Gorse, from which the Atherstone (in whose country we had been since soon after leaving Great Ashby) had taken a fox the Friday previous to this Monday, to within a short distance of Peatling.

This account was written for me by Mr. W. Nuttall, who knew the country thoroughly, and was out; as it was almost entirely in the Atherstone country I did not know it. The point was about eleven miles, and about fifteen or sixteen as hounds ran.

1887–88.

December 12th. Met at Kibworth; found in Peatling, raced past Arnesby to Bruntingthorpe, on towards Gilmorton and round to Walton Holt; 35 minutes to here; probably changed, ran on to Kilworth Sticks, did not enter, on towards Kilworth Sticks, and on to Daniell's Spinney, round towards Kimcote and back, to ground near Walton Holt and killed; 1 hour 27 minutes. Very frosty and snowy day.

January 23rd. Found in Gilmorton and ran very fast by Walton village to Misterton, to ground; 23 minutes. Found in Walton Holt and ran very fast close past Kilworth Sticks, and on to between Kimcote and Misterton, to ground; 16 minutes.

Norton Gorse Fox gives the Field a Fast 40 Minutes.

February 9th. Met at Ashlands; found in Norton Gorse and ran very fast over brook towards Coplow, back by Frisby, under Ashlands towards Billesdon Mill, under Skeffington Vale, left Rolleston covert just on right, over brook and straight to Keythorpe Wood, and lost; very good 40 minutes. Found in stick heap at Ilston Grange, raced, leaving Burton Overy on right, and straight on as if for Wistow, turned left, crossing Carlton bottom, up towards Kibworth Hall, turned right, and round Kibworth—over railway and back through the village nearly to Kibworth Hall, again crossing railway at Featherbed Lane, back again to Langton Hall, Church Langton, towards Langton Caudle, turning to right between East and Thorpe Langton, ran across flat to Bowden, and lost. A very good day.

The Fecundity of Reynard.

After a period of two months gestation, or a little over, the vixen usually brings forth a litter of from four to six cubs, which, as most readers will be aware, attain full size, if not maturity, in eighteen months, the average duration of life being believed to be from twelve to fifteen years. Like most wild animals, the vixen will instinctively and courageously defend her young, which at this early age, are exceedingly pretty and very playful. I have known several instances of cubs being brought up in captivity, and tamed to a certain extent, but they were untrustworthy and apt to snap at the hand that fed them. If I remember aright, the late Viscount Doneraile lost his life from the bite of a tame fox, from which rabies supervened.

As a rule wild creatures, whether of fur or feather, do not breed in captivity, but some years ago an experiment was made in our oldest colony, Newfoundland, in breeding from the wild silver-black fox in confinement. This animal being an exceedingly shy creature, most people were at first sceptical as to the possibility of success ; but without reason ; for the greater number of the beautiful skins which now adorn the ladies, many as valuable as sable, are the product of foxes, regularly bred and reared in captivity, the experiment having proved very interesting and profitable.

The Galloway Clears the Brook.

Hounds had found and gone away from the lower end of Norton Gorse, and were running across my father's Stretton Glebe, when as a youth I found myself, mounted on a Galloway called Tom Tucker, carried as fast as my quad. could lay his legs to the ground across one of the top fields ; the only means of getting out of which, without making a long detour, was *via* a stiff ash rail fence. This

obstacle was big enough to cause a momentary check to the wearer of more than one scarlet coat congregated in front of me, including the redoubtable Squire Braithwaite, who at the time rented the glebe for the shooting. Seeing them cornered I could not resist the temptation to show them what my cob could do! and without drawing rein put the grey at the timber, which I did not expect him to clear, and fortunately for us both he did not tip, but kneed the top rail with such force that his weight carried it clean away. I was hardly over before I heard the Squire at my side, whose voice rang out 'Well done, Fred, you've given Stacey (his bailiff) a job, at any rate? The grey was soon distanced now, but not for long, hounds taking the line straight across the brook pointing for Hall's farm and Swadborough Spinney, and when I came to the water a similar experience awaited me. The edge of the brook being much undermined, no one save the huntsman had ventured from such a bad take-off, but knowing every foot of its muddy banks, I made straight for a fairly sound place, when the grey had the satisfaction of giving the field a lead, and whilst others made for the ford higher up stream, for another brief spell, we found ourselves going strong with but few companions.

The Hired Mount and Second Horseman!

Early in the seventies, a rather fine-looking man used occasionally to put in his appearance, whose general demeanour caused no little curiosity and amusement. People living in the isolation of the country are necessarily more inquisitive than townsfolk, and many were the questions asked as to who this stranger could be, and where he came from! to which no satisfactory reply being forthcoming, the natives concluded that he must be out for the day, on a hired mount, and some charitably hinted that his 'whole get up' was 'included in the price.'

"An Incident."

However, the curiosity of the locals was not to be gratified this time, and as the stranger's airs and graces seemed to warrant it, they conferred upon him the appellation of Lord Tom Noddy. One of 'my Lord's' favourite assumptions was to pretend that he had ordered a second horseman to meet him at a certain time, and as this phantom of his imagination was invariably unpunctual, he would ride up and down, loudly exclaiming 'Confound that man of mine, I told him distinctly to be on the look-out for me at two o'clock.'

Run to Ground—The Ethics of Digging-out.

The moral principle upon which digging-out is justified by the veteran Mr. Tailby, is that if a fox has been run hard and crawls to ground, if left he may slowly die there; and if he selects a drain may drown, or die a lingering death. If there were two exits he always left one open, and took care that the fox should not be surrounded by either the field or the hounds.

Other old-fashioned sportsmen consider that if a fox has given a good straight run, and, notwithstanding that most of the earths have been stopped, he succeeds in finding a harbour of refuge, it should be respected; and if he has been sorely pressed, 'Whilst there's life there's hope,' and the gallant fox may live to run another day, as he richly deserves to do—

> 'Whilst he who's in the battle slain,
> Will never rise to *run* again.'

Of course if hounds are deprived of their well earned and legitimate quarry, they soon become slack, but I think the latter practice is now more generally adopted by Masters at the present day.

From hunting to shooting is only a step, and it may be

remarked that when the double-barrelled gun was first introduced, some men with the instinct of fair play which should ever characterise true sportsmen, considered it only a poacher's weapon; their argument being that if the bird had been shot at once and escaped, it deserved its life; and if it always escaped injury, there would be something to be said for their view; but the weakness of this argument lies in the fact that the bird may be only winged, and if not marked down, may die after prolonged suffering; whereas the second barrel gives the sportsman another chance to bring the quarry down.

Resignation of Sir Bache Cunard.

It was with sincere regret that the inhabitants of South Leicestershire learned, in 1888, of Sir Bache's decision to tender his resignation of the Mastership of the Hunt, over which he had presided for ten years. Sir Bache, it was universally acknowledged, had, during that long period, worthily upheld the glorious traditions of the Hunt which his famous predecessor, Mr. Tailby, had bequeathed to him, and moreover had gained the goodwill and esteem of all classes with whom he had come in contact.

The general estimation in which Sir Bache was held, not only in his official capacity of Master, but as a friend and neighbour, may best be realized by perusal of a summary of the account of the proceedings which took place at the time—for which I am indebted to the courtesy of the proprietors of the "Leicester Journal."

Hunting in High Leicestershire.

PRESENTATION TO SIR BACHE CUNARD AND WILLIAM GRANT.

On Thursday Evening last, November 1st, 1888, Sir Bache Cunard, Bart., was entertained to dinner, together with his huntsman, William Grant, in the Corn Exchange, Market Harborough, by members of the Hunt, landowners and occupiers and others, when they were the recipients of very handsome presents. The gentlemen comprising Sir Bache Cunard's testimonial committee were: Messrs. J. W. Logan, R. A. Falkner (Hon. Secretary), C. W. B. Fernie, J. H. Douglass, G. Coleman, and S. N. Bankart. Subscriptions flowed in freely, and at length £430 had been received from upwards of two hundred contributors. With this money a Silver Fox, weighing five hundred ounces, mounted on an ebony stand, was purchased from Rowland Ward and Company, Piccadilly.*

* The fox, of which this testimonial was a model, was killed near Ashlands, and very skilfully placed in position by Messrs. Potter & Son, the well-known taxidermists of Billesdon.

On a silver plate in the centre of the stand is the inscription :—'Presented to Sir Bache Cunard, by the Members of the Hunt on his resignation, in recognition of the way in which he hunted the country during the last ten seasons.'

To the Grant Testimonial Fund £175 was subscribed, with which the committee purchased a handsome silver cup, placing the balance of £134 in a purse, inside the cup, upon which is inscribed :—'Presented to William Grant, with a purse of 130 sovs., by subscribers, farmers and friends in the county, as a token of esteem and regard whilst 'whipper-in' to W. W. Tailby, Esq., 1869 to 1876, and huntsman to Sir Bache Cunard, Bart., 1880 to 1888.' The proceedings were of a very interesting character, Col. J. W. Baillie presided, and on his right were: Sir Bache Cunard, Bart., Sir Francis Turville, K.C.M.G., and J. Clerk, Esq., Q.C., and on his left C. W. B. Fernie, Esq., Sir Arthur Hazlerigg and J. T. Mills, Esq.; Mr. G. F. Stops filled the vice-chair, Mr. W. Grant being on his right. Amongst the company were : T. K. Tapling, Esq., M. P., Capt. Williams, Messrs. J. Steward, Gordon Cunard, R. B. Sheriffe, Capt. Hunt, Rev. C. E. Danby, Rev. C. E. Armstrong, Rev. F. Thorp, Messrs. A. Baillie, R. A. Falkner, H. S. Davenport, J. W. Logan, Major Bethune, Col. Arthur, and many others, the large room being crowded.

After a capital dinner and the usual loyal toasts, the chairman said the next toast was one which he felt quite certain would be very heartily drunk. It was 'the health of Sir Bache Cunard' (loud cheers and hunting cries). He very deeply regretted that they had lost so good a master, and he felt certain that his regrets were shared not only by all in the room but by many friends who were unable to be present (hear, hear). He had received letters from Mr. W. W. Tailby, Mr. Geo. Watson and others, expressing regret at not being able to be there, and their best wishes for the late Master, and the future new Master of the hounds.

During the ten years Sir Bache was Master of the hounds, he spared neither trouble nor expense to show them good sport (hear, hear), and he thought the occasion of their meeting there that night would prove that not only had his efforts been successful, but that they had been appreciated (applause). Although Sir Bache no longer carried the horn, he carried with him the best wishes of all who knew him (hear, hear). It was his (the chairman's) duty on behalf of the subscribers, to ask

Sir Bache to accept the testimonial hanging over his head—the silver fox—as a token of their goodwill and esteem and regard for him, and to assure him that it would always give them very sincere pleasure to see him amongst them at any time: and that whether Sir Bache was present or absent, they would neither forget him, nor forget what they all owed to him (applause.) For his own part, he believed he was one of the oldest friends Sir Bache had in that country. He had to thank Sir Bache not only for many pleasant days he had spent with the hounds, but for many acts of kindness which might have passed that gentleman's memory, but which would long remain indelibly fixed in his own. He would now ask the company to drink to the health and prosperity of Sir Bache wherever he may chance to go (loud applause).

The toast was drunk with musical honours. Sir Bache Cunard, who was received with the warmest enthusiasm, said he rose to thank them with very opposite feelings. It was with feelings of very great sorrow that this meeting should be as it were a sort of farewell taking between them, at any rate so far as hunting that country went. But it was with feelings of gratification to himself to think that any efforts of his, during the past ten years, should have met with such appreciation at their hands. It would be very unfair to him to take all the credit to himself, for the smooth way in which things had gone on. He had been most ably supported by his huntsman (loud applause). A good huntsman had a great deal more to do than to kill foxes. A hasty word, an uncivil speech spoken in the excitement of a run, might occasion a great deal of ill-feeling; that there had been nothing of that sort during his Mastership he knew to be the case by the splendid testimonial they had just presented to him (hear, hear). In these days change seemed to be the great thing to be expected, but in the hunting field, change was almost the last thing to be desired (hear, hear). It was a matter of great regret to him, therefore, that it had fallen to his lot to lower the average of the tenure of office of the Mastership of hounds, which at present stood at sixteen years for two Masters, but their thanks for that were principally due to Mr. Tailby (applause). He hoped Mr. Fernie would not only keep up the average, but increase it (hear, hear). He thanked them for the kind way in which they had received the toast, and for the testimonial they had presented to him; he should look upon it as a souvenir of good

fellowship (applause). There was no animal that created so much good fellowship as a fox. Their present would be handed down as a heirloom in his family, as a proof of the good fellowship which had always existed between himself and the subscribers towards the testimonial (applause). There was one other testimonial which he valued far more than the one presented to him, valuable as that might be, and that was to be assured of the fact that during the ten years he had hunted the hounds he had not made one single enemy (loud applause). The number of friends he had made, none knew better than himself, and he could only add that should it ever be his lot to become a Master of hounds again—and that was his dearest wish—he hoped it might be in South Leicestershire (loud applause).

Mr. Stops, the vice-chairman, then made the presentation to William Grant, the late huntsman; and after Mr. J. E. Bennett had proposed 'the new Master,' a toast which was drunk with enthusiasm, and to which Mr. Fernie responded in felicitous terms, and other toasts had been duly honoured, the proceedings were brought to a close by singing the National Anthem.

"Annals of the Billesdon Hunt."

PART III.

C. W. B. Fernie, Esquire.
Present Master, from 1888.

Biographical Sketch of
C. W. B. FERNIE, Esquire, M.F.H.

Mr. Charles Witherington Bruce Fernie, J.P., of Keythorpe, Leicestershire, married in 1900 Edith R., younger daughter of Mr. Thomas Hardcastle, of Blaston Hall.

In the brevity of this statement—which I take from that useful handbook "Who's Who"—all will recognize at least one prominent characteristic of the present Master, viz., his essential modesty and self-effacement; and whilst gratefully acknowledging the trouble which Mr. Fernie has taken in affording me all other information, I regret I have been unable to induce him to favour me with his own personal reminiscences of his Mastership, with which I had hoped to supplement this fragment.

I feel therefore that I shall best respect Mr. Fernie's wishes by refraining from any attempt to give a detailed account of his long, honourable, and highly appreciated connection with the Hunt; and will confine myself to the fact that the first "Meet" of the hounds under his Mastership, took place at Saddington, on Monday, November 5th, 1888. For evidence that during the long period which has since elapsed, Mr. Fernie has fully maintained the praiseworthy level of sport attained by his predecessors, Mr. Tailby and Sir Bache Cunard, the reader may, with confidence, be referred to the file of the "Leicester Journal," where a full account of Mr. Fernie's historic runs will be found, contributed by the correspondent who wrote under the *nom de plume* of 'Shangton Holt.' A few examples of more recent date are inserted in these pages, from the pen of that excellent sportsman, Mr. H. Mostyn Pritchard.

Sir Bache Cunard, in returning thanks for the testimonial presented to him in 1888, expressed a wish that Mr. Fernie might increase the average number of years during which

the hounds had been hunted by Mr. Tailby and himself (which then averaged sixteen). In calling this to mind, both Sir Bache and the members of the Hunt must feel well pleased that the wish, which then found utterance, has been duly gratified; the above high average having been passed eight years ago, and after a quarter-of-a-century, Mr. Fernie still finds himself at the helm, which, it is more than ever sincerely hoped, he may long retain.

Although my own personal acquaintance with Mr. Fernie is of the slightest, I cannot refrain from adding that whilst obtaining particulars for this volume in the neighbourhood of Keythorpe, I had many proofs of the genuine regard and esteem in which he is held, not only by the hunting fraternity, but by all and sundry. It would be unbecoming to specify particular instances when Mr. Fernie's name has been mentioned to me, often in eloquent and unmeasured terms of gratitude and affection, suffice it to say that by the testimony of the whole country-side he has long anticipated, and given practical effect to, the tenets of the 'personal service' crusade advocated by the Duke of Devonshire and the members of the Cavendish Club.

Painting of Thatcher and Hounds.

This very fine and life-like painting was presented to Mr. Fernie by subscribers to the Hunt, and is amongst his most highly prized possessions—occupying a central position upon the southern wall of the dining-room at Keythorpe.

The reproduction of the picture here given is from a photograph kindly supplied to me by Mr. Fernie, and shows the ultra-brilliant huntsman mounted on 'Tactitus,' with the favourite hounds Trimbush, Fireman, Ferryman, Daystar, Somerset, and Trueman, grouped around him, Slawston covert and windmill being seen in the distance. The latter ancient landmark, fondly remembered by numerous sportsmen all over the world, was preserved, I am told, when fast falling to decay, through the considerate and

KEYTHORPE.

THATCHER ON "TACITUS."

Charles Isaacs and Hounds.

timely intervention of Mrs. Fernie, who, I am given to understand, restored this interesting survival of the past.

I may here mention that the photograph which appears upon the cover of the 'Annals' is from a painting of two of Mr. Fernie's favourite bitches: 'Nancy' and 'Needless.'

Mr. Fernie has also been good enough to send me the following short account of the career of Thomas Isaac.

THOMAS ISAAC.

Thomas Isaac, commonly known as 'Charles,' was born in Cornwall, where his father hunted a pack of harriers for a local squire. At an early age he went into Devonshire, and when very young was employed by a horse dealer there, and rode in a steeple-chase at the age of fourteen. He was afterwards engaged at the Rufford kennels, where he rode a second horse, and then went to the Pytchley as second whipper-in, then became first whipper-in, and after thirteen years in that country came to me as huntsman in 1888, and retired in 1907, having been about thirty-three years with hounds.

In the "Leicester Advertiser" a few weeks ago, I observed a rather scathing reference was made by 'Ubique,' to a writer who had presumed to give what purported to be a biography of Thatcher, but who, in doing so, had had the misfortune to fall into several mistakes; the reader may however rest assured that the following brief sketch of this fine huntsman's career is free from any 'terminological inexactitude,' when I add that it is also from the pen of Mr. Fernie.

ARTHUR THATCHER.

The son of Alfred Thatcher, who was huntsman to the Brocklesby and the North Shropshire, and in the latter country Arthur rode his father's second horse for three years. He then went to Lord Middleton as second whipper-in, and after two years there, came to me in the same capacity in 1890. After five years as second whipper-in, he became first in 1895, and in 1898 went as huntsman to the Essex Union, where he remained two years, going in 1900 to the Cottesmore as huntsman, and coming back to me as huntsman, on Isaac's retirement, in 1907.

Famous Runs,

as graphically described, in his Hunting Journal, by
H. Mostyn Pritchard, Esquire.

On Thursday, 21st March, 1908, Millie, Margorie, and I went by the breakfast train to Hallaton, taking with us Averell Harriman, to give him a hunt in the Shires before sailing to America next day. The Caudle had given us a bad fox, and both Glooston and Stonton had failed, when we got behind a good one at Noseley. A big Thursday field, supplemented by many Pytchley people, started with them, and despite the pace and the big line which hounds travelled, a very good number stuck to them to the finish. Running nicely to Ilston, the bitch pack kept round the left of the village and gave us some nice fences to negotiate and hard galloping to keep with them; the first big obstacle was the Carlton bottom. Thatcher as usual was first, with Margorie and Major McKie, Pat Nickalls and Sam close alongside or behind him, and fence after fence presented itself in rapid succession and was duly left behind, whilst hounds raced on over the next brow, and crossing the next bottom near the bridle-road headed for Norton Gorse; turning down the Stretton Road nearly to King's Norton, they swing away left-handed round the covert, and rather defeated the right-hand brigade by this manœuvre. At this point I caught a glimpse of Harriman on one of Hames' horses, and Margorie on 'Success' was going strong a hundred yards ahead of me. Over the next bottom and up the next rise without a pause, and after crossing the Billesdon bottom at a jumpable place, the pack passed the Leicester Turnpike, and entered the Quorn country half-way between Billesdon and Houghton. The pace had been distinctly fast and fences big, all the ditches seeming to come on the take-off side, with the result that not a few who started from Noseley had already come to grief. Driving on down wind the fleet little ladies soon covered the distance to Billesdon Coplow, but sheering off from that celebrated covert, checked for a moment under Botany Bay; our quarry, however, had other views regarding his safety, and without entering either of the coverts he held gallantly to his original line, crossed the railway below Quenby, and was viewed away from the pack in the direction of Baggrave. A moment's breather gave our horses a much

Margorie's Bridle comes to Pieces on a Gate.

needed chance, and the big wattle fence below the park was treated with scorn, but there was little need for hurry now, for hounds were on their noses, and although they hunted on to the park at Baggrave, all Thatcher's efforts failed to set them going again, and he was compelled to leave this gallant fox to live, I hope, and show us another such hunt next season. Ten minutes later the skies broke in a deluge of rain and hail, and the remainder of the field dispersed, thoroughly pleased with their 8½-mile point.

This was Harriman's first experience of a hunt in England, and he takes back to Virginia, I am glad to say, an enthusiastic impression of fox-hunting in the old country; the only thing he did not quite appreciate were the ditches, which he has not been used to in America, and I am sorry to say at one place he met a second one on the far side with disastrous results, though neither he nor his horse were any the worse for their fall. The line was about as good as you could find in the Midlands, and a gallant fox drew it as straight as anyone could wish; the bitch pack made the most of a tearing scent, but never seemed to be able to reduce their quarry's lead to any appreciable extent.

Saturday, the 16th of January 1909, was a day, which though starting badly, ended by a capital hunt. Again I was energetic, and 6-30 a.m. saw me in a taxi threading the deserted streets of London in a foggy drizzle, snow succeeded, and the trains from the north came into Northampton plastered with snow, and round Brixworth the country was deep in snow. As we neared East Norton, my drooping spirits began to rise. The snow got thinner and thinner, and by 12 o'clock, hounds were leading us out of Horninghold to draw Hegg Plantation. A decent hunt in the morning, and by 3-30 I found myself mounted on my new purchase 'Little Slam,' standing in the angle at the right hand bottom corner of Alexton Wood, in company with Margorie, Major McKie, and half-a-dozen others.

We had not long to wait; a fine dog fox popped out at the very corner of the wood, and set his prow for the Hogs Back; giving him ample time, we moved off down the hill just as hounds and Thatcher came out of cover. At the foot of the hill, three or four of us followed McKie across the ford, and racing up that huge pasture beyond, crossed the Uppingham

Road just in time to see the whole pack tearing up the gully beyond. We had a good start and it really looked like a good thing. Half-a-dozen fences and we were almost on the Hogs Back, the Major led over a thickish fence with two ditches, both of which were filled with clippings, and unfortunately, Thatcher's horse, which had given him a fall already that day, put him down again heavily, to such purpose that he was clean knocked out, and the horn completely flattened against his ribs. After some delay the small remaining field galloped on to Launde Park Wood, where we caught the pack and hunted on across that fine wild stretch past Prior's Coppice, eventfully giving it up on the near side of Preston. It was a good gallop, and but for Thatcher's accident, it might have well been a great one.

'Little Slam' carried me perfectly, and I feel I have made a good purchase, so that despite my early start, and the fact that I slept that night in town, again my energy was well rewarded.

The best and fastest thing of a good season.

Thursday, 17th February 1910. A tempest of wind, cold bursts of rain, and half-an-hour's fruitless attempt to dislodge a fox from Thurnby cover, almost made me think my luck had turned at last. A biggish field had gathered at Billesdon despite the desperate state of the weather, and a quarter-to-Two found them at Glenn Gorse, having drawn three covers blank. Little did we guess that a moment more would set us going on one of the best gallops that this country has seen for many a long day. Millie was riding 'Curling Pin,' and Margorie 'Week End,' whilst I had a mount on 'Henrietta,' but as the first note proclaimed a fox, feeling it was a case of now or never, I changed on to 'Little Slam,' just in time to get a good place as Thatcher put his hounds on the line. It was the lady pack, and down the wind they came along in good style, passing through Hall's Spinney, crossing the road and increasing the pace as they sank the valley beyond. We were heading for Houghton, and the fences came in quick succession. Over the road the pack turned right-handed, and with the Billesdon washdykes on their left, raced on for Norton Gorse. Thatcher led us over the timber into the road, and turned left-handed through the gate, and those of us who jumped in and out had to tackle some more timber to get into line again. At this point of the run, Mr. Evan Hanbury, on one of Mr.

Mr. Fernie. Thatcher laying his hounds on the line at Hegg Spinney.

THE BEGINNING OF THE STOCKERSTON RUN, FEBRUARY 25TH, 1911.

(from a sketch made on the spot.)

Cross' best horses, was going along well with Major McKie, Thatcher, Margorie, Mr. Keith Gwyer, and one or two more riding on the right of the pack. Beyond the cover there was a holloa, and like lightning, Thatcher had his hounds out and over the King's Norton Road, where a moment's hesitation and the inside of the turn gave the field a chance of closing up. Hounds had run well to this check, but the best was still to come As they carried the line down to the brook, McKie had crossed and viewed one fox from the rising ground. Again Thatcher lifted his hounds forward, while his field were held up by the narrow gates and ford. This last manœuvre had put the pack on good terms, and they were running hard in the teeth of the gale, making the pace a cracker from this point to the end. Beyond the ford came three more fences, at the first of which 'Week End' put Margorie down, and then came the Carlton bottom. Holding the 'Grange' on the left, the pack began to go away from the leaders, and gallantly as Thatcher, McKie, and one or two others cut out the work, they were a field or more ahead, as the now beaten horses breasted the slope to Col. Chaplin's house. Thatcher and Mrs. Fernie, with a few more, turned through the grounds, but McKie, a lady and myself, crossed the road to the left. There was a hound carrying the line across the bottom, but as with a word from our pilot to keep our eyes open, we reached the brow beyond, a burst of music and Thatcher's jubilant who-whoop proclaimed the death of our gallant fox, 43 minutes from the find, in the corner of the same field. Ah! Mr. Jorrocks! and you others who say 'never take your hounds out on a windy day,' what price this my friends?

Another fine hunt ensued from Sheepthorns to Shangton Holt, and on to Tamborough Hill, through which cover they pushed their fox almost to Thurnby, but I left them beyond Tamborough and rode home in clearer weather. Great luck changing to my best of horses just in the nick of time. I never knew before how she could gallop and stay.

"THE HUNT OF A LIFETIME."

"The Stockerston Run."

Saturday, 25th February 1911. Mr. Fernie's at Horninghold. A morning towards the end of February, the sky slightly over-

cast, and a warm moist springy feeling in the air: a hunting morning, indeed, or I am much mistaken.

The Cottesmore are at Burton, and temptation is strong in that direction, but Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, Millie, and I went our way to join Mr. Fernie's pack at Horninghold; Millie on 'Curling Pin,' and I with a new quad. between my knees and 'Week End' in reserve.

Of Horninghold one never expects great things, as the proportions of the field testify this morning, but in February foxes are strong, and you may find a stranger who has come from afar; if so, look out for a bit of fun. Of such calibre undoubtedly was the big sandy fellow, who stood so gallantly before Mr. Fernie's bitch pack this memorable day. But to my story.

It is barely a quarter-to-twelve, as in full view of the field our pilot shakes the inhospitable dust of Hegg Spinney from his brush, and sets his mask for the Stockerston Woodlands. Hardly promising, this! and many of us take our time as Thatcher lays his hounds on the line, and they disappear over the brow to the left of the Uppingham Road. But we're wrong to-day, though; for, by the time Muckleborough Spinney is behind us, the pack are crossing the brook into Cottesmore territory, and we bustle along on the certainty of catching them in Wardley Wood or Stoke End, as we have done many a time before.

But no, by jove! they hesitate a moment below Beaumont Chase, and before we have time to make up the ground they are over the brow and heading for Uppingham, with Thatcher and a few lucky ones in close attendance. You cross the Turnpike to the left of the town, and after another mile catch them at Glaston, cursing your stupidity for a run lost. But calm yourself my friend, this is merely the beginning, and you'll be glad of that extra bit in hand before many more miles are put behind. There is no time for a breather yet, for hounds have turned sharp to the left, and there is the road and bottom ahead; a gate leads from the former, and two more fences bring us down to the latter, where for a moment the bitches look like giving us the slip. A practicable place is quickly found, and Thatcher gives us the office over the rails and water, and then another mile of good going and easy fences bring us up to Preston. So far the pace has been good, and hounds have come along with hardly a check; they pause

MAJOR SCHOFIELD, V.C., ON "ANACONDA."

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

by the village, but Thatcher lifts them across the road to hunt more slowly down to the brook beyond; two nice fences and the bridge handy give us a good place with the pack as they take up the running on the big pastures below Manton Gorse. That well-known covert affords no shelter for foxes this year, and leaving it to their right, the bitches drive on over the grass as if they had only just started. 'Hullo! here's that belt of trees we see in Giles' picture.' We crawl in over the ruined wall and jump out beyond, getting the worst of the turn as they swing away right-handed over the brow, and come down to the Manton brook at an ugly place; but there is no time to be lost when they run like this. Boore has his nippers out in a twinkling. 'It isn't a picture when you *have* cut the wire' Massey suggests, and Thatcher, seeing the wisdom of the remark, jumps the fence to the left, and crossing higher up joins his hounds as they set their helm for Orton Park Wood, three good miles ahead. Here's a picture for you now! I'll stake my hat you can't beat this! Eighteen couple of those fleet little ladies racing ahead; plenty of room to gallop and jump, the pink of Leicestershire before you, and fourteen good miles already behind. This may fall to your lot but once in a life-time!

There's a scent in covert, too, and the pack drive through so quickly that Thatcher is only just in time to catch them beyond, and some of us who follow his boy down past the right of the wood nearly get left for our pains. Three fields beyond they are at fault, and for a moment it looks as if Lady Wood were the point, when a timely holloa on the brow enables Thatcher to get them going again, and we thank our stars that the pace is easier to Knossington; there is a slight pause by the right of the village, and as they carry the line into the spinnies you have time to look around. Sixteen miles I make it, and a good many have dropped out. Falls have not been very numerous, though young Thatcher has taken a nasty one, luckily without ill-effect. His father has been cutting out the work, riding and handling his hounds in the most brilliant form. Messrs. Gough, Massey and Mason, Major Schofield, Captains Holland and Porter, Messrs. Fletcher, Mawson, Gilillan and several others are there, but of the fair sex only three have come with us to this point, the two Miss Maudslays and Millie, while Mrs. Fernie, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Gough, Mrs. McKenzie and others join in here. For two or three minutes hounds can be heard running the line in covert, and then

Boore's cheery holloa brings us all scampering up the centre ride. Mr. Fernie is very anxious not to go on with a fresh fox, but the fellow viewed away from the top end is undoubtedly the hunted one, and, moreover, answers closely the description of our original pilot; so we plod on by Cold Overton, praying for those second horses that don't somehow turn up. Hunting in a right-handed ring, the pack come round to the left of Knossington village, and then settle down to run their hardest. 'Really, this is beyond a joke!' You'd sell your soul for a fresh horse; its a sheer impossibility to go on with this! Millie pulls 'Curling Pin' up, its twenty miles she has come if its a yard, and the mare has carried her well; but there is an end to all things, and she turns reluctantly homewards.

A moment later I get 'Week End,' and push on with Captain Holland to catch them near Owston cross-roads. With the far-famed Marfield Vale before him, our gallant pilot looks like going for ever, but the ladies have pushed him hard these last few miles, and one field short of Peek's covert he doubles to the right for Somerby. Surely the end cannot be far off now! They are actually in the same field with him by the village, but a change has come over the sky, and under the heavy black clouds scent has dwindled to nothing. 'You *must* handle this fellow' I remark, as I slide off to unfasten a gate for Thatcher, but he doesn't seem any too confident. There are a dozen of us only in attendance now, the lucky ones who got their second horses, but the pack are on their noses as they cross the bottom by the Somerby-Owston Road, and are pulled up altogether on the two big fallows beyond. On the grass again the line is clearer, and they push along merrily over the road and up the hill; on the top road there is news of our fox, and we jump out at an easy place (we want them easy now, by jove!), and keeping along the brow, get a glimpse of him to the right of Cold Overton. A mile further Jack Boore, still on his first horse, has viewed him again, heading for Orton Park Wood; Thatcher lifts the bitches along the road, and hitting off the line they hunt slowly down the left of Lady Wood and forward still till the fork roads, short of Braunstone, are reached. There is not a murmur to proclaim a line beyond the road, so Thatcher takes them back up the last field to where there is a haystack and a drain. Besides the huntsman and two hunt-servants there are six survivors: Mr. Gough, of Belton; Captains Porter and Holland; young Mr. Greaves, of Quenby; a farmer and your humble servant, while young Mr. Murray-Smith turns up a quarter-of-an-hour later. But the

"The End of the Stockerston Run."

finale is yet to come. Thatcher is standing on the stick-heap by the drain, bitterly disappointed at the disappearance of his beaten fox, when the hounds feather up the furrow; he is off his perch in a second, cheering on the pack on foot, and handles his fox a moment later. And so after all this remarkable hunt ended with blood, and in this respect holds the advantage over the great Waterloo run of the Pytchley, and the Greatwood run with the Duke of Beaufort, with which it has been compared in the papers. I have since talked it over with Thatcher, and worked out the points carefully on the map; and not allowing for small deviations I cannot make it less than twenty-eight-and-a-half miles. The distance between the farthest points, *i.e.*, Hegg Spinney and the point where our fox turned short of Peak's covert, is approximately nine miles by crow-fly. A great deal has been said about the change of foxes, for it seems almost incredible that one fox could have stood before hounds for all that distance, but I doubt if they changed in Orton Park Wood, and it was undoubtedly a hunted fox they took from Knossington. Foxes lie out at this time of year, and they may have picked up a fresh one anywhere, but Thatcher thinks that in all probability he killed the one he started with. Be that as it may, he hunted his hounds in masterly fashion, and may be congratulated on having scored a run, the like of which is not to be found for many years back in the history of fox-hunting. Postscript: the time from start to finish was about 3 hours 20 minutes. It is a curious coincidence that this run began close to the spot where Colonel Anstruther Thompson whipped off his hounds in the dark at the end of the Waterloo run in February 1866.

Historic run with Mr. Fernie's—14-Mile Point.

March 23rd, 1912. Getting away from Bolt Wood, near Stockerston, about half-past two, behind what Thatcher afterwards described as the best fox he ever hunted, Mr. Fernie's dog-pack on Saturday last ran the Woodlands to Alexton, and crossing the brook to the right of the village, raced along over a beautiful line of country, passed Turner's Gorse and over the Hog's Back as if for Prior's coppice; before the brook was reached, however, they swung left-handed, and drove through Lawn Park Wood without a pause. The heavy state of the ground had given hounds every advantage over horses, and the big field was quickly tailed off. Thatcher, who had had a nasty fall at the start, got up to his hounds again here, and

with his assistance they hunted down the Lover's Walk and on to Owston Wood, which they entered near the Whadborough end. At this juncture a large part of the field followed them into the wood, but only those who kept round the left side with the huntsman had a start with the pack as they crossed the Owston Road, and set their helm for Marfield Vale; with the slope in their favour, and what may, I suppose, be called one of the finest stretches of country in England before them, the twenty-five or so horsemen were afforded a treat it would be hard to equal in fox-hunting. Fence after fence was put behind as the pack slid along over the big pastures as far as Newbold Lodge, where for a moment they were at fault; a left-hand cast, however, quickly set them going again, though the pace was not so good as they breasted the rise to Captain Allfrey's house at Burrough. Crossing the road to the left of the village the pace improved again, and it was only the easy gradient that enabled horses to stay with them to Adam's Gorse. Carrying the line through the top end of the spinney, the pack hunted on over the high ground, and hit the cross-road beyond Thorpe Satchville; here again they hesitated, but were quickly away, with the railway on their left and the Melton Road on their right; passing the line at Great Dalby station, hounds hunted on across a stretch of plough land, and eventually came to a full stop in the vicinity of Sanham Lodge, just 2 hours and 25 minutes from the start. The point was exactly fourteen miles as the crow flies, and we must have gone twenty miles, allowing for deviations. The line was about as fine a one as can be traced on the map of Leicestershire; starting in Mr. Fernie's woodlands, crossing the cream of the Cottesmore and the Quorn countries nearly into the Belvoir. I think there is little doubt they stuck to the same fox all the way, but he must have been a remarkable customer, as no one ever viewed him, and he simply ran us out of scent, despite the pace and the few checks that occurred. At the finish about twenty of the large field that started remained, and horses and hounds had a rare gruelling, and ended a good twenty miles from their kennels.

Amongst those who saw this run I noted Mrs. Fernie, Major KcKie, Captain Allfrey, Mr. E. G. K. Cross, Captain Stephen, Mr. Bernard Wilson, Miss Wilson, Mr. Evan Hanbury, Mr. Bertie Hanbury, Miss N. Hanbury, Mr. Gough, Mr. Mawson, Mr. Pelham, Mr. and Mrs. Wormald, Mr. Cecil Fletcher, Miss Fletcher, Mrs. Mostyn Pritchard, and myself.

MRS. FERNIE, ON "BRUNETTE."

H. J. Whitlock, Photographer.

MISS BUTLER.

Walter Bale, Photographer.

1912-13.

Respecting last season, a wet winter made the ground ride day after day deeper and deeper, until at last it was scarcely fit to ride at all. In Leicestershire they used to say "The wetter the better hounds run," but it was not so this past season. Nevertheless some splendid hunts were experienced, and some fine points made; hounds upon two occasions, at least, coming into the Melton locality from Stoughton and Alexton way, having to be trained home.

1913-14.

During the current season the pastures have remained green right through the autumn, and with such rank vegetation and blind fences, small wonder that casualties have been unusually heavy.

Owing to the numerous accidents which occurred to sportsmen about fifty years ago through their coming in collision with over-hanging boughs, a great many trees in hedge-rows were cut down, but that it is still necessary to "prenez garde, aux branches des arbres," and exercise care when fencing in their vicinity, is once more demonstrated by the unfortunate, though happily not serious, accident which befel the Duchess of Teck when out with the Cheshire hounds a few days ago.

Amongst other things which help to make fox-hunting popular with all classes, nothing has done more in recent years than the increase in the number of Point-to-Point Meetings throughout the country, and whereas in former days, Top Leicestershire men used to resort to the old natural grand-stand of the hill side at Burrough, they can now congratulate themselves upon the successful inauguration of a local meeting; a fine natural course having been selected in the immediate vicinity of Ashlands (which property near Billesdon has recently been acquired by Miss Butler, an enthusiastic follower of hounds), to which great numbers were attracted last spring, and in which it is safe to prophecy an increasing interest and attendance each year.

In Mr. Fernie's country, outstanding hunts during the month of November—a month seldom marked by great runs—were rare, for foxes evinced a lack of daring, and the weather was so fine and mild that every countryside was daily alive with foot people, anxious to participate in whatever fun there was going, and consequently many a fox "got headed." Still, on Thursday, November 13th, there was a very fine hunt, embracing an eight-mile point, from Langton Cowdale—as it used to be commonly spelt and pronounced fifty years ago—by way of Glooston and Cranoe, and along the Hallaton Dingles to Ram's Head at Keythorpe; and thence on across the stiffly-fenced Horninghold region to Merevale Holt, where fresh foxes came to the rescue of a toil-worn comrade.

Amongst the younger generation who may frequently be seen at the covert side is Miss Sylvia Kaye, whose photograph upon "Prince" herein appears. Sylvia commenced her career with Mr. Fernie's hounds at six years of age, was "blooded" by Thatcher, and is the proud possessor of a pad and the mask of the fox killed on that memorable occasion. This little *equestrienne*, upon her favourite pony, has already taken a prize in a jumping competition at Olympia, and no doubt will equally well maintain her reputation in the hunting-field.

Romance in the Hunting Field.

The opportunities which the hunting field affords for indulging in a little mild flirtation are too numerous even to summarise, but it may be taken for granted that many an acquaintanceship made under such propitious circumstances, ends in double harness. In theory it is supposed that a formal introduction can no more easily be dispensed with here than elsewhere, but this is to reckon without the chapter of accidents, and other happenings, which in practice prove the contrary. It is only necessary to mention a few of the possibilities of making a new acquaintance if desired. The mere civility of opening a gate, the chance

Miss Sylvia Kaye on "Prince."

W. W. Rouch & Co. Photographers.
(*Copyright*)

which may present itself to give a 'friendly lead,' active assistance cheerfully rendered in regaining possession of a riderless steed, help to remount, a shoe cast, a horse lamed; these, and many other incidents, may befall the fair *equestrienne*, and the good sportsman, like the true knight of old, will always be ready to rescue a damsel in distress. Gracious thanks for his attention, although he may not look for them, the sportsman is sure to receive, and upon a subsequent meeting possibly a bow of recognition, and if he has been careful to make the most of his opportunity, he may even be rewarded with a smile!

The 'fates,' still working in the young couple's favour, may ordain that they take the same road to the "Meet," get simultaneously 'thrown out,' or when the shades of evening are falling, wend their way homewards together.

So many romantic elopements took place fifty years ago, which originated in the hunting field, that they gave rise to the toast "Here's to the bridle that leads to the bridal," or "Here's to the halter that leads to the altar," and the following authentic and amusing account of one which had its first beginning in the hunting field may interest the reader. Both the hero and heroine belong to the past, but the facts are well within the recollection of the lady who communicated them to the writer, she herself having been a personal friend of the bride, who in her old age took great pleasure in relating every detail to the youngsters; hence I need have no scruple in repeating them. 'He' was a strikingly handsome young English subaltern, whose regiment was then quartered in the north, his only fortune being his sword. 'She' was the beautiful daughter of a 'proud and mighty' Scottish noble. They were both passionately fond of hunting, and met at the covert-side. It was one of those happy instances when instinct, triumphing over the cold calculations of reason, proclaimed itself in no unmistakeable manner; in short, it was a case of love at first sight. His Christian name was Robert, but to his intimates he was always known as 'Bob.' Which of the many opportunities the enterprising Bob took to declare

himself I am unable to say, but, however well his addresses were received by the object of his choice, on the subject being broached to her noble father, his Lordship met the proposal with a decided veto. Meeting next day in the hunting-field, and realizing their hopeless position, the youthful couple then and there decided to elope. After a rapid ride of some miles, they took and accepted each other (she in her habit, he booted and spurred), as man and wife, in the presence of two witnesses. But as everyone knows, to make this a valid marriage according to the laws of Scotland,—upon which many a binding decision of the courts rest,—consummation of the marriage must follow immediately. But I am anticipating. As soon as the lady's noble father's suspicions were aroused by the non-return of his daughter, he made enquiries, the result of which induced him to follow the young couple with such despatch that he overtook them whilst they were resting at a wayside hostelry.

The indignant, and now thoroughly alarmed parent, insisted on making his way to their apartment; but whilst he was thundering with his riding whip on the door, demanding admittance, his daughter, more conversant—as a Scotswoman—with the law's provisions, and the consequent urgency of the situation, immediately drew down the blinds (for it was still daylight), jumped into bed, and unheeding her father's angry summons, called out to her lover: "Quick Bob,—into bed Bob,—boots and all Bob"! with which invitation, needless to add, 'Bob' complied with alacrity; and when the door was broken open, the young officer and his plucky bride were safe from further molestation.

It is pleasant to add that, in this case, a speedy reconciliation followed, and when the proud father became, as he did, a still more proud grandfather, he always rejoiced that he was just too late!

Incidentally, the records of Gretna Green were kept, as late as 1851, at the Tollhouse, and comprise fifteen volumes, containing entries of between seven and eight

thousand marriages, including those of many run-away couples from South of the border, some even from Leicestershire. Happily for romantic couples, these marriage laws of Scotland, although less frequently put in operation, remain the same to this day, all that is required being the mutual consent—verbal or written—of the parties; but for the sake of any who may be fancifully inclined, I had better add, that the marriage now requires to be registered within three months.

Conclusion.

I should add that the runs described in the 'Annals' only represent a tithe of the good runs which have been enjoyed with the three successive Masters in every decade since the foundation of the South Leicestershire Hunt, and it is to be hoped that the present generation of sportsmen may live to rival—if not surpass—the doughty deeds of their predecessors. The old saying that 'a southerly wind and a cloudy sky, proclaims a hunting morn,' is no more to be relied upon than many other old saws; indeed one of the pleasures of fox-hunting rests upon its glorious uncertainty; for like much else in life, the unexpected always happens, so that one should not be too greatly elated, or unduly depressed, whatever may be the state of the barometer. And if it is difficult to prognosticate the sport for any one day, how impossible it becomes to foretell, or account for good and bad seasons, which seem to come in reciprocal succession; much the same as the crops of the field, the orchard and the rose-garden are meted out by Dame Nature. Doubtless the alternation of shadow and sunshine in life serves a good purpose, which philosophy is most beautifully expressed in several exquisite verses by Charles Dickens*—addressed to Parents—which begin:

Oh! choose not a lot for the dear ones, all radiant, as others have done,
But that life may have just as much shadow, as will temper the glare of the sun.

* In my possession, but which I believe have never yet been published.—F. P. de C.

APPENDIX.

With reference to the dispute between the Quorn and the Billesdon Hunt, which, owing to its importance, is herein given at considerable length (see pp. 153–167), I am in receipt of the following communication from Viscount Churchill, just as the last part of this volume goes to press:—

> In the year 1909, being a member of Mr. Fernie's Hunt Committee, and one of the chief land owners in the district hunted by him (a small question having arisen with the Cottesmore Hunt, as to the exact boundary between the two Hunts on the Skeffington Lordship, which entailed a certain amount of correspondence with the Quorn Hunt Committee), I, after consultation with the other land owners, &c., informed the chairman of the Quorn Hunt Committe (Lord Belper), that whilst acknowledging that in the old days Mr. Fernie's country formed part of the Quorn proper, yet in view of the fact of its having been hunted seperately for so many years, we had no intention of its ever reverting again to the Quorn. We therefore thought it in the interests of fox-hunting, and to avoid any controversy at the time when the country should again be vacant, to tell them this definitely, in order that this point should be an acknowledged fact.
>
> I have the whole of the correspondence which took place on this occasion, but for the moment I cannot lay my hands on it, and I am therefore sending you this short résumé.

VISCOUNT CHURCHILL.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

Through the courtesy of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. T. N. Graham, of East Farndon Hall, Market Harborough, I append a

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